THE HISTORY OF King LEAR,

Acted at the

QUEENS THEATRE.

Revived with Alterations.

By *N. TATE.*

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THE
HISTORY
OF
KING LEAR

To my Esteemed Friend *Thomas Boteler*, Esq;

SIR,

YOU have a natural Right to this Piece, since by your Advice I attempted the Revival of it with Alterations. Nothing but the Pow'r of your perſuaſions, and my Zeal for all the Remains of Shakeſpear, cou'd have wrought me to ſo bold an Undertaking. I found that the New-modelling of this Story, would force me ſometimes on the difficult Task of making the chiefeſt Perſons ſpeak ſomething like their Charracter, on Matter whereof I had no Ground in my Author: Lear's real and Edgar's pretended Madneſs had ſo much of extravagant Nature, (I know not how elſe to expreſs it,) as cou'd never have ſtarted but from our Shakeſpear's creating Fancy. The Images and Language are ſo odd and ſurprizing, and yet ſo agreeable and proper, that whilſt we grant that none but Shakeſpear cou'd have form'd ſuch Conceptions; yet we are ſatisfied that they were the only Things in the World that ought to be ſaid on thoſe Occaſions. I found the whole to anſwer your account of it, a Heap of Jewels, unſtrung, and unpoliſht; yet ſo dazling in their Diſorder, that I ſoon perceiv'd I had ſeiz'd a Treaſure. 'Twas my good fortune to light on one Expedient to rectifie what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the whole, as Love betwixt Edgar and Cordelia; that never chang'd word with each other in the Original. This renders Cordelia's Indifference, and her Fathers Paſſion in the firſt Scene, probable. It likewiſe gives Countenance to Edgar's Diſguiſe, making that a generous Deſign that was before a poor Shift to ſave his Life. The Diſtreſs of the Story is evidently heightned by it; and it particularly gave Occaſion of a New Scene or Two, of more Succeſs (perhaps) than Merit. This method neceſſarily threw me on making the Tale conclude in a Succeſs to the innocent diſtreſt Perſons: Otherwiſe I muſt have incumbred the Stage with dead Bodies, which Conduct makes many Tragedies conclude with unſeaſonable Jeſts. Yet was I wrack with no ſmall Fears for ſo bold a Change, till I found it well receiv'd by my Audience; and if this will not ſatisfy the Reader, I can produce an Authority that queſtionleſs will. Neither is it of ſo Trivial an Undertaking to make a Tragedy end happily, for 'tis more difficult to ſave than 'tis to Kill: The Dagger and Cup of Poiſon are always in Readineſs; but to bring the Action to the laſt Extremity, and then by probable Means to recover All, will require the Art and Judgment of a Writer, and coſt him many a Pang in the Performance.

Mr. Dryd. *Pref. to the* Spaniſh Fryer.

I have one thing more to apologize for, which is that I have us'd leſs Quaintneſs of Expreſſion even in the Neweſt Parts of this Play. I confeſs, 'twas Deſign in me, partly to comply with my Author's Style, to make the Scenes of a Piece, and partly to give it ſome Reſemblance of the Time and Perſons here Repreſented. This, Sir, I ſubmit wholly to you, who are both a Judg and Maſter of Style. Nature had exempted you before you went Abroad from the Moroſe Saturnine Humour of our Country, and you brought home the Refinedneſs of Travel without the Affectation. Many faults I ſee in the following Pages, and queſtion not but you will diſcover more; yet I will preſume ſo far on your Friendſhip, as to make the whole a Preſent to you, and Subſcribe my ſelf,

Your obliged Friend
and humble Servant,

N. Tate.

PROLOGUE.

Since by Miſtakes your beſt delights are made,
(For e'en your Wives can pleaſe in Maſquerade,)
'Twere worth our while, to have drawn you in this Day
By a new Name to our old honeſt Play;
But he that did this Evenings Treat prepare
Bluntly reſolv'd before-hand to declare
Your Entertainment ſhould be moſt old Fare.
Yet hopes, ſince in rich Shakeſpear's ſoil it grew,
'Twill reliſh yet, with thoſe whoſe Taſts are true,
And his Ambition is to pleaſe a Few.
If then this Heap of Flow'rs ſhall chance to wear
Freſh beauty in the Order they now bear,
Even this Shakeſpear's Praiſe; each ruſtick knows
'Mongſt plenteous Flow'rs a Garland to Compoſe,
Which ſtrung by this Courſe Hand may fairer ſhow,
But 'twas a Power Divine firſt made 'em grow.
Why ſhou'd theſe Scenes lie hid, in which we find
What may at once divert and teach the Mind;
Morals were always proper for the Stage,
But are ev'n neceſſary in this Age.
Poets muſt take the Churches Teaching Trade,
Since Prieſts their Province of Intrigue invade;
But we the worſt in this Exchange have got,
In vain our Poets Preach, whilſt Churchmen Plot.

The Perſons.

King *Lear*,	Mr. *Betterton*.
Gloſter,	Mr. *Gillo*.
Kent,	Mr. *Wiltſhire*.
Edgar,	Mr. *Smith*.
Baſtard,	Mr. *Jo. Williams*.
Cornwall,	Mr. *Norris*.
Albany,	Mr. *Bowman*.
Gentleman Uſher,	Mr. *Jeven*.
Goneril,	Mrs. *Shadwel*.
Regan,	Lady *Slingsby*.
Cordelia,	Mrs. *Barry*.

Guards, Officers, Meſſengers, Attendants.

KING *LEAR.*

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

Enter Baſtard *Solus.*

Baſt. THOU Nature art my Goddeſs, to thy Law
My Services are bound; Why am I then
Deprived of a Son's Right, becauſe I came not
In the dull Road that Cuſtom has preſcrib'd?
Why Baſtard, wherefore Baſe, when I can boaſt
A Mind as gen'rous, and a ſhape as true
As honeſt Madam's Iſſue? Why are we
Held Baſe, who in the luſty ſtealth of Nature
Take fiercer Qualities than what compound
The ſcanted Births of the ſtale Marriage bed;
Well then, Legitimate *Edgar*, to thy Right
Of Law I will oppoſe a Baſtards Cunning.
Our Father's Love is to the Baſtard *Edmund*
As to Legitimate *Edgar*: with ſucceſs
I've practis'd yet on both their eaſie Natures:
Here comes the old Man chaf't with th' Information
Which laſt I forg'd againſt my Brother *Edgar*,
A Tale ſo plauſible, ſo boldly utter'd,
And heightned by ſuch lucky Accidents,
That now the ſlighteſt Circumſtance confirms him,
And baſe-born *Edmund* ſpight of Law inherits.

Enter Kent *and* Gloſter.

Gloſt. Nay, good my Lord, your Charity
O'er-ſhoots it ſelf to plead in his behalf;
You are your ſelf a Father, and may feel
The ſting of Diſobedience from a Son
First-born and beſt belov'd: Oh Villain *Edgar!*
Kent. Be not too raſh, all may be Forgery,
And time yet clear the Duty of your Son.
Gloſt. Plead with the Seas, and reaſon down the Winds,
Yet ſhalt thou ne'er convince me, I have ſeen
His foul Deſigns through all a Fathers fondneſs:
But be this Light and thou my Witneſſes,

That

That I discar'd him heat from my Possessions,
Divorce him from my Heart, my Blood, and Name.
Bast. It works as I cou'd wish; I'll shew my self.
Glost. Ha! *Edmund!* welcome Boy; O *Kent!* see here
Inverted Nature, *Glosser's* Shame and Glory,
This By-born, the wild sally of my Youth,
Pursues me with all filial Offices,
Whilst *Edgar*, begg'd of Heaven, and born in Honour,
Draws Plagues on my white Head, that urge me still
To curse in Age the Pleasure of my Youth.
Nay, weep not, *Edmund*, for thy Brother's Crimes;
O gen'rous Boy! thou shar'st but half his Blood,
Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a Brother:
But I'll reward thy Vertue. Follow me.
My Lord, you wait the King, who comes resolv'd
To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
His Realms amongst his Daughters; Heavens succeed it;
But much I fear the Change.
Kent. I grieve to see him
With such wild starts of Passion hourly seiz'd,
As render Majesty between it self.
Glost. Alas! 'tis the Infirmity of his Age,
Yet has his Temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'rick and sudden; hark, they approach.
[*Exeunt* Glost. *and* Bast.

Flourish. Enter Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Burgundy, Edgar, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, Edgar *speaking to* Cordelia *at Entrance.*
Edgar. Cordelia, Royal Fair, turn yet once more,
And e'er successful *Burgundy* receive
The treasures of thy Beauties from the King,
E'er happy *Burgundy* for ever hold Thee,
Cast back one pitying Look on a wretched *Edgar.*
Cord. Alas! What wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with
The more unfortunate *Cordelia*?
Who in obedience to a Fathers Will
Flies from her *Edgar's* Arms to *Burgundy's*?
Lear. Attend my Lords of *Albany* and *Cornwall*,
With Princely *Burgundy.*
Alb. We do, my Liege.
Lear. Give me this Map.—Know, Lords, we have divided
In Three, our Kingdom, having now resolv'd
To disengage from Our long Toil of State,
Conferring all upon your younger years;
You *Burgundy*, *Cornwall* and *Albany*,
Long in Our Court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my Daughters,

Which,

Which of you loves Us moſt, that We may place
Our largeſt Bounty with our largeſt Merit.
Goneril. Our Eldeſt-born, ſpeak firſt.
Gon. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd Rich, or Rare;
Nor Liberty, nor Sight, Health, Fame, or Beauty,
Are half ſo dear, my Life for you were vile,
As much as Child can love the beſt of Fathers.
Lear. Of all theſe Bounds, e'en from this Line to this,
With ſhady Foreſts, and wide-skirted Meads,
We make thee Lady; to thine and *Albany*'s Iſſue
Be this perpetual ——What ſays our Second Daughter?
Reg. My Siſter, Sir, in part expreſt my Love;
For ſuch as Hers, is mine, though more extended;
Senſe has no other Joy that I can reliſh,
I have my All in my dear Liege's Love.
Lear. Therefore to thee and thine Hereditary
Remain this Ample Third of our fair Kingdom.
Cord. Now comes my Trial, How am I diſtreſt, [*Aſide.*
That muſt with cold ſpeech tempt the Chol'rick King
Rather to leave me Dowerleſs, than condemn me
To loath'd Embraces.
Lear. Speak now our laſt, not leaſt in our dear Love,
So ends my Task of State,——*Cordelia*, ſpeak;
What canſt thou ſay to win a richer Third
Than what thy Siſters gain'd?
Cord. Now muſt my Love in words fall ſhort of theirs
As much as it exceeds in Truth,—Nothing, my Lord.
Lear. Nothing can come of Nothing, ſpeak agen.
Cord. Unhappy am I that I cannot diſſemble,
Sir, as I ought I love your Majeſty,
No more nor leſs.
Lear. Take heed, *Cordelia*,
Thy Fortunes are at ſtake, think better on't,
And mend thy Speech a little.
Cord. O my Liege!
You gave me Being, bred me, dearly love me,
And I return my Duty as I ought,
Obey you, love you, and moſt honour you;
Why have my Siſters Husbands, if they love you All?
Haply when I ſhall wed, the Lord whoſe Hand
Shall take my Plight, will carry half my Love;
For I ſhall never marry like my Siſters,
To love my Father All.
Lear. And goes thy Heart with this?
Tis ſaid that I am Chol'rick, Judge me, Gods,

Is their not cauſe? Now, Minion, I perceive
The Truth of what has been ſuggeſted to Us;
Thy fondneſs for the Rebel Son of *Glaſter*,
Falſe to his Father, as thou art to my Hopes:
And, oh! take heed, raſh Girl, leſt we comply
With thy fond wiſhes, which thou wilt too late
Repent; for know, Our Nature cannot brook
A Child ſo young, and ſo ungentile.

Cord. So young, my Lord, and True.

Lear. Thy Truth then be thy Dow'r;
For by the ſacred Sun, and ſolemn Night,
I here diſclaim all my paternal Care,
And from this minute hold thee as a Stranger
Both to my Blood and Favour.

Kent. This is Frenzy.
Conſider, good my Liege,——

Lear. Peace, *Kent*;
Come not between a Dragon and his Rage;
I lov'd her moſt, and in her tender Truſt
Deſign'd to have beſtow'd my Age at Eaſe:
So be my Grave my Peace, as here I give
My Heart from her, and with it all my Wealth:
My Lords of *Cornwall*, and of *Albany*,
I do inveſt you jointly in full Right
In this fair Third, *Cordelia*'s forfeit Dow'r.
Mark me, my Lords, obſerve Our laſt reſolve,
Our Self, attended with an hundred Knights,
Will make Abode with you in monthly Courſe;
The Name alone of King remain with me,
Yours be the Execution and Revenues;
This is our final Will, and to confirm it,
This Coronet part between you.

Kent. Royal *Lear*,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,
Lov'd as my Father, as my Maſter follow'd,
And, as my Patron, thought on in my Prayers,——

Lear. Away, the Bow is bent, make from the Shaft.

Kent. No, let it fall and drench within my Heart,
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad:
Thy youngeſt Daughter——

Lear. On my Life no more.

Kent. What wilt thou do, old Man?

Lear. Out of my Sight.

Kent. See better firſt.

Lear. Now by the Gods,——

Kent. Now by the Gods, raſh King, thou ſwear'ſt in vain.

Lear. Ha Traytor!
Kent. Do, kill thy Phyſician, *Lear*;
Strike through my Throat, yet with my lateſt Breath
I'll thunder in thine Ear my juſt Complaint,
And tell Thee to thy Face that thou doſt ill.
Lear. Hear me, raſh Man; on thy Allegiance hear me;
Since thou haſt ſtriv'n to make Us break our Vow,
And preſt between our Sentence and our Pow'r,
Which nor our Nature nor our Place can bear,
We baniſh thee for ever from our Sight
And Kingdom; if when Three days are expir'd,
Thy hated Trunk be found in our Dominions,
That moment is thy Death; Away.
Kent. Why, fare thee well, King; ſince thou art reſolv'd,
I take thee at thy word, and will not ſtay,
To ſee Thy Fall: the Gods protect the Maid
That truly thinks, and has moſt juſtly ſaid.
Thus to new Climates my old truth I bear,
Friendſhip lives Hence, and Baniſhment is here. [*Exit.*
Lear. Now, *Burgundy*, you ſee her price is faln,
Yet if the fondneſs of your Paſſion ſtill
Affects her as ſhe ſtands, Dow'rleſs, and loſt
In our Eſteem, ſhe's yours; take her, or leave her.
Burg. Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand
The Dow'r your ſelf propos'd, and here I take
Cordelia by the Hand, Dutcheſs of *Burgundy*.
Lear. Then Leave her, Sir, for by a Father's rage
I tell you all her Wealth. Away.
Burg. Then, Sir, be pleas'd to charge the breach
Of our Alliance on your own Will,
Not my Inconſtancy.
[*Exeunt.* *Manet* Edgar *and* Cordelia.
Edg. Has Heaven then weigh'd the merit of my Love,
Or is't the raving of my ſickly thought?
Cou'd *Burgundy* forgoe ſo rich a Prize,
And leave her to deſpairing *Edgar*'s Arms?
Have I thy Hand *Cordelia*? Do I claſp it?
The Hand that was this minute to have joyn'd
My hated Rival's? Do I kneel before thee,
And offer at thy Feet my panting Heart?
Smile, Princeſs, and convince me; for as yet
I doubt, and dare not truſt the dazling Joy.
Cord. Some Comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious Blot
That has depriv'd me of a Father's Grace,
But meerly want of that which makes me rich
In wanting it; a ſmooth profeſſing Tongue:

O Sister! I am loth to call your fault
As it deserves; but use our Father well,
And wrong'd *Cordelia* never shall repine.
Edg. O heav'nly Maid! that art thy self thy Dow'r
Richer in vertue then the Stars in Light,
If *Edgar*'s humble Fortunes may be grac't
With thy Acceptance, at thy Feet he lays 'em.
Ha, my *Cordelia!* dost thou turn away?
What have I done t' offend Thee?
Cord. Talk't of Love.
Edg. Then I've offended oft, *Cordelia* too
Has oft permitted me so to offend.
Cord. When, *Edgar*, I permitted your Addresses,
I was the darling Daughter of a King,
Nor can I now forget my Royal Birth,
And live dependant on my Lovers Fortune;
I cannot to so low a Fate submit;
And therefore study to forget your Passion,
And trouble me upon this Theme no more.
Edg. Thus Majesty takes most State in Distress!
How are we tost on Fortune's fickle floud!
The Wave that with surprising Kindness brought
The dear wreck to my Arms, has snatcht it back,
And left me mourning on the barren Shoar.
Cord. This Baseness of th' ignoble *Burgundy*, [*Aside.*
Draws just suspicion on the Race of Men;
His Love was Int'rest, so may *Edgar*'s be,
And He, but with more Complement, dissemble;
If so, I shall oblige him by denying:
But if his Love be fixt, such constant Flame
As warms our Breasts, if such I find his Passion,
My Heart as grateful to his Truth shall be,
And could *Cordelia* prove as Kind as He. [*Exit.*

Enter Bastard *hastily.*

Bast. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute,
Fly and be safe, some Villain has incens'd
Our Father against your Life.
Edg. Distress *Cordelia!* but, oh! more Cruel.
Bast. Hear me, Sir, your Life, your Life's in Danger.
Edg. A Resolve so sudden,
And of such black Importance!
Bast. 'Twas not sudden,
Some Villain has of long time laid the Train.
Edg. And yet perhaps 'twas but pretended Coldness,
To try how far my Passion would persue.
Bast. He hears me not; wake, wake, Sir.

Edg.

Edg. Say ye, Brother? ——— ——
No Tears, good *Edmund*, if thou bringeſt me Tydings
To ſtrike me dead, for Charity delay not,
That Preſent will befit ſo kind a Hand.
Baſt. Your danger, Sir, comes on ſo faſt,
That I want time t' inform you; but retire
Whilſt I take care to turn the preſſing Stream.
O gods! for Heav'ns ſake, Sir.
Edg. Pardon me, Sir, a ſerious Thought
Had ſeiz'd me, but I think you talkt of danger,
And wiſht me to retire; Muſt all our Vows
End thus?——Friend, I obey you.——O *Cordelia!* [*Exit.*
Baſt. Ha! ha! fond Man, ſuch credulous Honeſty
Leſſens the Glory of my Artifice;
His Nature is ſo far from doing wrongs,
That he ſuſpects none: If this Letter ſpeed,
And paſs for *Edgar's*, as himſelf wou'd own
The Counterfeit, but for the foul Contents,
Then my deſigns are perfect.——Here comes *Gloſter.*

Enter Gloſter.

Gloſt. Stay, *Edmund*, turn; What Paper were you reading?
Baſt. A Trifle, Sir.
Gloſt. What needed then that terrible diſpatch of it
Into your Pocket? Come, produce it, Sir.
Baſt. A Letter from my Brother, Sir, I had
Juſt broke the Seal, but knew not the Contents;
Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your ſight.
Gloſt. 'Tis *Edgar's* Character. [*Reads.*
This Policy of Fathers is intolerable, that keeps our Fortunes from us till Age will not ſuffer us to enjoy 'em; I am weary of the Tyranny: Come to me, that of this I may ſpeak more. If our Father would ſleep till I wak'd him, you ſhould enjoy half his Poſſeſſions and live beloved of your Brother Edgar.
Slept till I wak'd him! you ſhou'd enjoy
Half his Poſſeſſions!——*Edgar* to write this
'Gainſt his indulgent Father! Death and Hell!
Fly, *Edmund*, ſeek him out, wind me into him,
That I may bite the Traytor's Heart, and fold
His bleeding Entrals on my vengeful Arm.
Baſt. Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my Vertue.
Gloſt. Theſe late Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon
Can bode no leſs; Love cools, and Friendſhip fails,
In Cities Mutiny, in Countries Diſcord,
The bond of Nature crack't 'twixt Son and Father:

Find out the Villain; do it carefully,
And it ſhall loſe thee nothing. [*Exit.*

Baſt. So, now my Projects firm; but to make ſure
I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one;
I'll place old *Gloſter* where he ſhall o'er-hear us
Confer of this Deſign; whilſt, to his thinking,
Deluded *Edgar* ſhall accuſe himſelf.
Be Honeſty my Int'reſt, and I can
Be honeſt too: And what Saint ſo Divine,
That will ſucceſsful Villany decline? [*Exit.*

Enter Kent *diſguis'd.*

Kent. Now, baniſht *Kent*, if thou canſt pay thy Duty
In this diſguiſe, where thou doſt ſtand condemn'd,
Thy Maſter *Lear* ſhall find thee full of Labours.

Enter Lear *attended.*

Lear. In there, and tell our Daughter we are here.
Now, What art Thou?

Kent. A Man, Sir.

Lear. What doſt thou profeſs, or wou'dſt with us?

Kent. I do profeſs to be no leſs than I ſeem, to ſerve him truly that puts me in Truſt, to love him that's honeſt, to converſe with him that's wiſe and ſpeaks little, to fight when I can't chuſe; and to eat no Fiſh.

Lear. I ſay, What art Thou?

Kent. A very honeſt-hearted fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. Then art thou poor indeed.——What canſt thou do?

Kent. I can keep honeſt Counſel, mar a curious Tale in the telling, deliver a plain Meſſage bluntly; that which ordinary Men are fit for, I am qualifi'd in; and the beſt of me is Diligence.

Lear. Follow me; thou ſhalt ſerve me.

Enter one of Goneril's *Gentlemen.*

Now Sir?

Gent. Sir——— [*Exit*; Kent *runs after him.*

Lear. What ſays the Fellow? Call me the Clodpole back:

Att. My Lord, I know not, but methinks your Highneſs is entertained with ſlender Ceremony.

Servant. He ſays, my Lord, your Daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the Slave back when I call'd him?

Serv. My Lord, he anſwered me i' th' ſurlieſt manner,
That he wou'd not.

Re-enter Gentleman *brought in by* Kent.

Lear. I hope our Daughter did not ſo inſtruct him:
Now, who am I, Sir?

Gent. My Ladies Father.

Lear. My Lord's Knave.——— [*Strikes him.*

[Goneril

[Goneril *at the Entrance.*

Gon. By Day and Night, this is insufferable,
I will not bear it.
Lear. Now, Daughter, why that frontlet on?
Speak, do's that Frown become our Presence?
Gent. I'll not be struck, my Lord.
Kent. Nor tript neither, thou vile Civet-box.
[*Strikes up his Heels.*
Gon. Sir, this licentious Insolence of your Servants
Is most unseemly, hourly they break out
In quarrels bred; by making this known to you,
I thought t' have had a Redress, but find too late
That you protect and countenance their out-rage;
And therefore, Sir, I take this freedom, which
Necessity makes Discreet.
Lear. Are you our Daughter?
Gon. Come, Sir, let me intreat you to make use
Of your Discretion, and put off betimes
This Disposition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.
Lear. Do's any here know me? why, this is not *Lear*;
Do's *Lear* walk thus? speak thus? where are his Eyes?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?
Gon. Come, Sir, this Admiration's much o'th' savour
Of other your new humours; I beseech you
To understand my purposes aright;
As you are old, you shou'd be staid and wise:
Here do you keep an hundred Knights and Squires,
Men so debauched and bold, that this our Palace
Shews like a riotous Inn, a Tavern, Brothel;
Be then advis'd by her that else will take
That which she begs, to lessen your Attendance,
Take half away, and see that the remainder
Be such as may befit your Age, and know
Themselves and you.
Lear. Darkness and Devils!
Saddle my Horses, call my Train together;
Degenerate Viper, I'll not stay with Thee!
I yet have left a Daughter.——Serpent, Monster!
Lessen my Train, and call 'em riotous?
All men approv'd, of choice and rarest Parts,
That each particular of duty know.——
How small, *Cordelia*, was thy Fault? O *Lear*,
Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgment out; Go, go, my People.

[*Going*

[*Going off meets* Albany *entring.*

Ingrateful Duke, was this your will?

Alb. What Sir?

Lear. Death, fifty of my Followers at a clap!

Alb. The matter, Madam?

Gon. Never afflict your ſelf to know the Cauſe,
But give his Dotage way.

Lear. Blaſts upon thee,
Th' untented woundings of a Father's Curſe
Pierce ev'ry ſenſe about Thee; old fond Eyes,
Lament this Cauſe again, I'll pluck ye out,
And caſt ye with the Waters that ye looſe
To Temper Clay.——No, *Gorgon*, thou ſhalt find
That I'll reſume the Shape which thou doſt think
I have caſt off for ever.

Gon. Mark ye that.

Lear. Hear Nature!
Dear Goddeſs hear; and if thou doſt intend
To make that Creature fruitful, change thy purpoſe;
Pronounce upon her Womb the Barren Curſe,
That from her blaſted Body never ſpring
A Babe to honour her;——But if ſhe muſt bring forth,
Defeat her Joy with ſome diſtorted Birth
Or Monſtrous Form, the Prodigy o' th' Time,
And ſo perverſe of Spirit, that it may live
Her Torment as 'twas Born, to fret her Cheeks
With conſtant Tears, and wrinkle her young Brow.
Turn all her Mother's Pains to Shame and Scorn,
That ſhe may curſe her Crime too late, and feel
How ſharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is
To have a Thankleſs Child: Away, away. [*Exit cum ſuis.*

Gon. Preſuming thus upon his numerous Train,
He thinks to play the Tyrant here, and hold
Our Lives at will.

Alb. Well, you may bear too far [*Ex.*

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II.

SCENE, *Gloſter's* Houſe.

Enter Baſtard.

Baſt. THE Duke comes here to Night, I'll take advantage
Of his Arrival to complete my project:
Brother, a Word, come forth; 'tis I your Friend, [*Enter* Edgar.
My Father watches for you, fly this place,

Intelli-

ntelligence is giv'n where you're hid;
Take the advantage of the Night; bethink ye,
Have you not ſpoke againſt the Duke of *Cornwall*
Something might ſhew you a favourer of
Duke *Albany*'s Party?

Edg. Nothing; why ask you?

Baſt. Becauſe he's coming here to Night in haſte,
And *Regan* with him—Hark! the Guards; away.

Edg. Let 'em come on, I'll ſtay and clear my ſelf.

Baſt. Your Innocence at leiſure may be heard,
But *Gloſter*'s ſtorming rage as yet is deaf,
And you may periſh e'er allow'd the hearing— [*Ex.* Edgar.
Gloſter comes yonder: now to my feign'd Scuffle———
Yield, come before my Father! Lights here, Lights!
Some Blood drawn on me wou'd beget opinion [*Stabs his Arm.*
Of our more fierce Encounter.——I have ſeen
Drunkards do more than this in ſport. } *Enter* Gloſter
Gloſt. Now, *Edmund*, where's the Traytor? } *and Servants.*
Baſt. That Name, Sir,
Strikes Horrour through me; but my Brother, Sir,
Stood here i' th' Dark.

Gloſt. Thou bleed'ſt! purſue the Villain.
And bring him peece-meal to me.

Baſt. Sir, he's fled.

Gloſt. Let him fly far, this Kingdom ſhall not hide him:
The Noble Duke, my Patron, comes to Night;
By his Authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the Stage,
And Death for the Concealer.
Then of my Lands, loyal and natural Boy,
I'll work the means to make thee capable. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Kent (*diſguis'd ſtill*) *and* Goneril's *Gentleman, ſeverally.*

Gent. Good morrow Friend, belongſt thou to this Houſe?

Kent. Ask them will anſwer thee.

Gent. Where may we ſet our Horſes?

Kent. I'th' Mire.

Gent. I am in haſte, prethee an' thou lov'ſt me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Gent. Why then I care not for Thee.

Kent. An' I had thee in *Lipsbury* Pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.

Gent. What do'ſt thou mean? I know thee not.

Kent. But, Minion, I know Thee.

Gent. What do'ſt thou know me for?

Kent. For a baſe, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, glaſs-gazing, ſuperſerviceable finical Rogue; one that wou'd be a Pimp in way of good

good Service, and art nothing but a compoſition of Knave, Beggar, Coward, Pandar.———

Gent. What a monſtrous Fellow art thou to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee?

Kent. Impudent Slave! not know me, who but two days ſince tript up thy heels before the King: Draw, Miſcreant, or I'll make the Moon ſhine through thee.

Gent. What means the Fellow?—Why prethee, prethee; I tell thee I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. I know your Rogueſhips Office; you come with Letters againſt the King, taking my young Lady *Vanity*'s part againſt her Royal Father: Draw, Raſcal.

Gent. Murther, murther, help. *Exit.* Kent *after him.*

Flouriſh. Enter Duke of Cornwal, Regan, *attended*; Gloſter, Baſtard.

Gloſt. All Welcome to your Graces, you do me honour.

Duke. Gloſter, W'ave heard with ſorrow that your Life
Has been attempted by your Impious Son:
But *Edmund* here has paid you ſtricteſt Duty.

Gloſt. He did betray his Practice, and receiv'd
The Hurt you ſee, ſtriving to apprehend him.

Duke. Is he purſu'd?

Gloſt. He is, my Lord.

Reg. Uſe our Authority to apprehend
The Traytor, and do Juſtice on his Head;
For you, *Edmund*, that have ſo ſignaliz'd
Your Vertue, you from hence forth ſhall be ours;
Natures of ſuch firm Truſt we much ſhall need,
A Charming youth, and worth my farther Thought. [*Aſide.*

Duke. Lay comforts, noble *Gloſter*, to your Breaſt,
As we to ours, This Night be ſpent in Revels,
We chuſe you, *Gloſter*, for our Hoſt to Night,
A troubleſome expreſſion of our Love.
On, to the Sports before us——Who are theſe?

Enter the Gentleman *purſu'd by* Kent.

Gloſt. Now, what's the matter?

Duke. Keep peace upon your Lives, he dies that ſtrikes.
Whence, and what are ye?

Att. Sir, they are Meſſengers, the one from your Siſter,
The other from the King.

Duke. Your difference? Speak.

Gent. I'm ſcarce in breath, my Lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have ſo beſtir'd your Valour.
Nature diſclaims the Daſtard; a Taylor made him.

Duke.

Duke. Speak yet how grew your Quarrel?
Gent. Sir, This old Ruffian here, whose Life I spar'd
In pity to his Beard.———
Kent. Thou Escence Bottle!
In pity to my Beard———Your leave my Lord,
And I will tread the Mus-cat into Mortar.
Duke. Know'st thou our presence?
Kent. Yes, Sir, but Anger has a Privilege,
Duke. Why art thou angry?
Kent. That such a Slave as this shou'd wear a Sword
And have no Courage; Office, and no Honesty;
Not Frost and Fire hold more Antipathy
Than I and such a Knave.
Glost. Why dost thou call him Knave?
Kent. His Countenance likes me not.
Duke. No more perhaps does Mine, nor His, or Hers.
Kent. Plain dealing is my Trade, and to be plain, Sir,
I have seen better Faces in my time,
Than stands on any Shoulders now before me.
Reg. This is some Fellow, that having once been prais'd
For Bluntness, since affects a sawcy Rudeness;
But I have known one of these surly Knaves,
That in his plainness harbour'd more Design
Than twenty cringing complementing Minions.
Duke. What's the Offence you gave him?
Gent. Never any, Sir,
It pleas'd the King his Master lately
To strike me on a slender misconstruction,
Whilst watching his advantage, this old Lurcher
Tript me behind, for which the King extoll'd him;
And, flusht with the honour of this bold Exploit,
Drew on me here agen.
Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, we'll teach you,
Kent. Sir, I'm too old to learn;
Call not the Stocks for me, I serve the King
On whose Employment I was sent to you,
You'll shew too small Respect, and too bold Malice
Against the Person of my Royal Master,
Stocking his Messenger.
Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, as I have Life and Honour,
There shall he sit till Noon.
Reg. Till Noon, my Lord? till Night, and all Night too.
Kent. Why Madam, If I were your Father's Dog
You wou'd not use me so.
Reg. Sir, being his Knave I will.

Gloſt. Let me beſeech your Graces to forbear him,
His fault is much, and the good King his Maſter
Will check him for't, but needs muſt take it ill
To be thus ſlighted in his Meſſenger.
Duke. We'll anſwer that;
Our Siſter may receive it worſe to have
Her Gentleman aſſaulted: to our buſineſs lead. [*Exit.*
Gloſt. I am ſorry for thee, Friend, 'tis the Duke's pleaſure,
Whoſe Diſpoſition will not be controll'd,
But I'll entreat for thee.
Kent. Pray do not, Sir——
I have watch'd and travell'd hard,
Some time I ſhall ſleep out, the reſt I'll whiſtle:
Farewell t'ye Sir. [*Ex. Gloſt.*
All-weary and o'er watcht,
I feel the drowzy Gueſt ſteal on me; take
Advantage heavy Eyes on this kind Slumber,
Not to behold this vile and ſhameful Lodging. [*Sleeps.*

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard my Self Proclaim'd,
And by the friendly Hollow of a Tree,
Eſcape the Hunt, no Port is free, no Place
Where Guards and moſt unuſual Vigilance
Do not attend to take me—How eaſie now,
'Twere to defeat the malice of my Trale,
And leave the Griefs on my Sword's reeking Point;
But Love detains me from Death's peaceful Cell,
Still whiſpering me, *Cordelia*'s in diſtreſs;
Unkind as ſhe is, I cannot ſee her wretched,
But muſt be near to wait upon her Fortune.
Who knows but the white Minute yet may come,
When *Edgar* may do ſervice to *Cordelia*,
That charming hope ſtill ties me to the Oar
Of painful Life, and makes me to ſubmit
To the humbleſt ſhifts to keep that Life a-foot;
My face I will beſmear, and knit my Locks,
The Country gives me proof and preſident
Of *Bedlam* Beggers, who, with roaring Voices
Strike in there numm'd and mortifi'd bare Arms
Pins, Iron-ſpikes, Thorns, Sprigs of Roſemary;
And thus from Sheeps-coats, Fillages, and Mills,
Sometimes with Prayers, ſometimes with Lunatick Bans,
Enforce their Charity, poor *Turlygod*, poor *Tom*,
That's ſomething yet, *Edgar* I am no more. [*Ex.*
Kent.

Kent *in the Stocks ſtill; Enter* Lear *attended.*

Lear. 'Tis ſtrange that they ſhould ſo depart from home,
And not ſend back our Meſſenger.
Kent. Hail, noble Maſter.
Lear. How! Mak'ſt thou this Shame thy Paſtime?
What's he that has ſo much miſtook thy Place,
To ſet thee here?
Kent. It is both He and She, Sir, your Son and Daughter.
Lear. No. *Kent*, Yes. *Lear*, No, I ſay. *Kent*, I ſay yea.
Lear. By *Jupiter* I ſwear no.
Kent. By *Juno* I ſwear, I ſwear Ay.
Lear. They durſt not do't;
They cou'd not, wou'd not do't; 'tis worſe than Murther,
To do upon Reſpect ſuch violent out-rage.
Reſolve me with all modeſt haſte, which way
Thou mayſt deſerve, or they impoſe this uſage?
Kent. My Lord, when at there Home
I did commend your Highneſs Letters to them,
E'er I was ris'n arriv'd another Poſt,
Steer'd in his haſte, breathleſs and panting forth
From *Goneril*, his Miſtreſs Salutations,
Whoſe Meſſage being deliver'd, they took Horſe,
Commanding me to follow, and attend
The leiſure of there Anſwer; which I did;
But meeting that other Meſſenger
Whoſe welcome I perceiv'd had poiſon'd mine,
Being the very Fellow that of late
Had ſhewn ſuch rudeneſs to your Highneſs, I
Having more Man than Wit about me, Drew,
On which he rais'd the Houſe with Cowards cries:
This was the Treſpaſs which your Son and Daughter
Thought worth the ſhame you ſee it ſuffer here.
Lear. Oh! how this Spleen ſwells upward to my Heart,
And heaves for paſſage.—Down, thou climing rage;
Thy Element's below; where is this Daughter?
Kent. Within, Sir, at a Maſque.

Enter Gloſter.

Lear. Now *Gloſter*?———ha!
Deny to ſpeak with me; th'are ſick, th'are weary,
They have travell'd hard to Night;——mere fetches;
Bring me a better Anſwer.
Gloſt. My dear Lord,
You know the fiery quality of the Duke,—

Lear. Vengeance, Death, Plague, Confuſion;
Fiery! what Quality,—Why *Gloſter*, *Gloſter*,
I'd ſpeak with the Duke of *Cornwal*, and his Wife.
Gloſt. I have inform'd 'em ſo.
Lear. Inform'd 'em! doſt thou underſtand me, Man,
I tell thee, *Gloſter*,——
Gloſt. Ay, my good Lord.
Lear. The King wou'd ſpeak with *Cornwal*, the dear Father
Wou'd with his Daughter ſpeak, commands her Service.
Are they inform'd of this? my Breath and Blood!
Fiery! the fiery Duke tell the hot Duke——
No, but not yet, may be he is not well,
Infirmity do's ſtill neglect all Office;
I beg his Pardon, and I'll chide my Raſhneſs
That took the indiſpos'd and ſickly Fit
For the ſound Man:——But wherefore ſits he there?
Death on my State, this Act convinces me
That this Retiredneſs of the Duke and her,
Is plain Contempt; give me my Servant forth;
Go tell the Duke and his Wife I'd ſpeak with 'em
Now, inſtantly, bid 'em come forth and hear me;
Or at their Chamber Door I'll beat the Drum,
Till it cry ſleep to Death.——

Enter Cornwal *and* Regan.

Oh! Are ye come?
Duke. Health to the King.
Reg. I am glad to ſee your Highneſs.
Lear. Regan. I think you are, I know what cauſe
I have to think ſo; ſhou'dſt thou not be glad
I wou'd divorce me from thy Mother's Tomb?
Beloved *Regan*, thou wilt ſhake to hear
What I ſhall utter: Thou coud'ſt ne'r h' thought it,
Thy Siſters naught, O *Regan*, ſhe has ty'd { Kent *here ſet at*
Ingratitude like a keen Vulture here, { *Liberty.*
I ſcarce can ſpeak to thee.
Reg. I pray you, Sir, take patience; I have hope
That you know leſs to value her Deſert,
Than ſhe to ſlack her Duty.
Lear. Ha! How's that?
Reg. I cannot think my Siſter in the leaſt
Would fail in her reſpects; but if perchance
She has reſtrain'd the Riots of your Followers,
'Tis on ſuch Grounds, and to ſuch wholeſome Ends,
As clear her from all Blame.

Lear.

Lear. My Curſes on her.
Reg. O Sir, you're old,
And ſhou'd content you to be rul'd and led,
By ſome diſcretion that diſcerns your State
Better than your ſelf; therefore, Sir,
Return to our Siſter, and ſay you have wrong'd her.
Lear. Ha! Ask her Forgiveneſs?
No, no, 'twas my miſtake, thou didſt not mean ſo?
Dear Daughter I confeſs that I am old;
Age is unneceſſary, but thou art good,
And wilt diſpence with my Infirmity.
Reg. Good Sir, no more of theſe unſightly paſſions;
Return back to our Siſter.
Lear. Never, *Regan*,
She has abated me of half my Train,
Look'd black upon me, ſtabb'd me with her Tongue;
All the ſtor'd Vengeances of Heav'n fall
On her Ingrateful Head; ſtrike her young Bones
Ye taking Airs with Lameneſs.
Reg. O the bleſt Gods! Thus will you wiſh on me,
When the raſh Mood——
Lear. No, *Regan*, Thou ſhalt never have my Curſe,
Thy tender Nature cannot give thee o'er
To ſuch Impiety; Thou better know'ſt
The Offices of Nature, Bond of Childhood,
And Dues of Gratitude; thou bear'ſt in mind
The half o'th' Kingdom, which our love conferr'd
On thee and thine.
Reg. Good Sir, to the purpoſe.
Lear. Who but my Man i'th' Stocks?
Duke. What Trumpet's that?
Reg. I know't, my Siſters, this confirms her Letters.
Sir, is your Lady come?

Enter Goneril's *Gentleman.*

Lear. More Torture ſtill?
This is a Slave, whoſe eaſie borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows;
A faſhion-fop, that ſpends the day in Dreſſing,
And all to bear his Lady's flatt'ring Meſſage,
That can deliver with a Grace her Lye,
And with as bold a Face bring back a greater.
Out, Varlet, from my ſight.
Duke. What means your Grace?

Lear. Who ſtockt my Servant? *Regan*, I have hope
Thou didſt not know it.

Enter Goneril.

Who comes here? Oh Heav'ns!
If you do love Old Men; if you ſweet Sir
Allow Obedience; if your ſelves are Old,
Make it your Cauſe, ſend down and take my part?
Why, *Gorgon*, doſt thou come to Haunt me here?
Art not aſham'd to look upon this Beard?
Darkneſs upon my Eyes, they play me falſe,
O *Regan*, Wilt thou take her by the Hand?
Gon. Why not by th' Hand, Sir? How have I offended?
All's not Offence that Indiſcretion finds,
And Dotage terms ſo.
Lear. Heart, thou art too tough.
Reg. I pray you, Sir, being old, confeſs you are ſo,
If till the expiration of your Month,
You will return and ſojourn with our Siſter,
Diſmiſſing half your Train, come then to me;
I am now from Home, and out of that Proviſion
That all be needful for your entertainment.
Lear. Return with her, and Fifty Knights diſmiſt,
No, rather I'll forſwear all Roofs, and chuſe
To be Companion to the Midnight Wolf.
My naked Head expos'd to th' merc'leſs Air,
Than have my ſmalleſt wants ſuppli'd by her.
Gon. At your choice, Sir.
Lear. Now I prethee Daughter do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my Child, farewel.
We'll meet no more, no more ſee one another;
Let ſhame come when it will, I do not call it,
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer ſtrike,
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging Heav'n;
Mend when thou canſt, be better at thy leiſure,
I can be patient, I can ſtay with *Regan*,
I, and my hundred Knights.
Reg. Your Pardon, Sir,
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.
Lear. Is this well ſpoken now?
Reg. My Siſter treats you fair; what! fifty followers?
Is it not well? what ſhou'd you need of more?
Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive Attendance
From thoſe whom ſhe calls Servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why

Reg. Why not, my Lord? if then they chance to ſlack you,
We cou'd controul 'em.——If you come to me,
For now I ſee the Danger, I entreat you
To bring but Five and Twenty; to no more
Will I give place.
Lear. Hold now, my temper, ſtand this bolt unmov'd,
And I am Thunder proof;
The wicked, when compar'd with the more wicked,
Seem beautiful, and not to be the worſt,
Stands in ſome rank of Praiſe; now, *Goneril*,
Thou art innocent agen, I'll go with thee;
Thy Fifty yet, do's double Five and Twenty,
And thou art twice her Love.
Gon. Hear me, my Lord.
What need you Five and Twenty, Ten, or Five,
To follow in a Houſe, where twice ſo many
Have a command t' attend you?
Reg. What need one?
Lear. Bloud! Fire! here—Leproſies and blueſt Plagues!
Room, room for Hell to belch her Horrors up
And drench the *Circes* in a ſtream of Fire;
Heark how th' Infernals eccho to my rage
Their Whips and Snakes.——
Reg. How lewd a thing is Paſſion!
Gon. So old and ſtomachful. [*Lightning and Thunder.*
Lear. Heav'ns drop your Patience down;
You ſee me here, ye Gods, a poor old Man,
As full of Griefs as Age, wretched in both—
I'll bear no more: No, you unnatural Haggs,
I will have ſuch Revenges on you both,
That all the World ſhall——I will do ſuch things,
What they are yet I know not, but they ſhall be
The Terrors of the Earth; you think I'll weep, [*Thunder again.*
This Heart ſhall break into a thouſand pieces
Before I'll weep.——O Gods! I ſhall go mad. [*Exit.*
Duke. 'Tis a wild Night, come out o' th' Storm. [*Exeunt.*

End of the Second Act.

ACT III.

SCENE, *A Desert Heath.*

Enter Lear *and* Kent *in the Storm.*

Lear. BLOW Winds, and burst your Cheeks, rage louder yet,
Fantastick Lightning singe, singe my white Head;
Spout Cataracts, and Hurricanoes fall,
Till you have drown'd the Towns and Palaces
Of proud ingrateful Man.

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can perswade him
Into some needful shelter, or to bide
This poor slight Cov'ring on his aged Head
Expos'd to this wild War of Earth and Heav'n,

Lear. Rumble thy fill, fight Whirlwind, Rain, and Fire;
Not Fire, Wind, Rain or Thunder are my Daughters:
I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you Kingdoms, call'd you Children;
You owe me no Obedience, then let fall
Your horrible pleasure, here I stand your Slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old Man;
Yet will I call you servile Ministers,
That have with two pernicious Daughters joyn'd
Their high engendred Battle against a Head
So Old and White as mine, Oh! oh! 'tis Foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a Hovel, that will lend
Some Shelter from this Tempest.

Lear. I will forget my Nature, what! so kind a Father?
Ay, there's the Point.

Kent. Consider, good my Liege, Things that love Night
Love not such Nights as this; these wrathful Skies
Frighten the very wanderers o' th' Dark,
And make 'em keep their Caves; such drenching Rain,
Such Sheets of Fire, such Claps of horrid Thunder,
Such Groans of roaring Winds have ne'er been known.

Lear. Let the Great Gods,
That keep the dreadful pudder o'er our Heads,
Find out their Enemies now. Tremble thou Wretch,
That hast within thee undiscover'd Crimes?
Hide, that Bloody hand,———
Thou perjur'd Villain, holy Hypocrite,
That drink'st the Widows Tears, sigh now, and cry
These dreadful Summoners Grace, I am a Man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Good Sir, to th' Hovel.

Lear.

Lear. My Wit begin to burn,
Come on my Boy, how doſt my Boy? art Cold?
I'm cold my ſelf; ſhew this Straw, my Fellow,
The Art of our Neceſſity is ſtrange,
And can make vile things precious; my poor Knave,
Cold as I am at Heart, I've one place There [Lond. *Storm.*
That's ſorry yet for Thee. [*Exit.*

Gloſter's *Palace.* *Enter* Baſtard.

Baſt. The Storm is in our louder Rev'lings drown'd,
Thus wou'd I reign, cou'd I but mount a Throne.
The Riots of theſe prou'd Imperial Siſters
Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
Of Taxes, and hard Impoſitions on
The drudging Peaſants Neck, who bellow out
Their loud Complaints in vain.—Triumphant Queens!
With what Aſſurance do they treat the Crowd.
O for a Taſt of ſuch Majeſtick Beauty,
Which none but my hot veins are fit t' engage;
Nor are my wiſhes deſp'rate, for even now,
During the Banquet, I obſerv'd their Glances
Shot thick at me, and as they left the Room
Each caſt by ſtealth a kind inviting Smile,
The happy Earneſt——ha!

Two Servants from ſeveral Entrances deliver him each a Letter, and Ex.

Where Merit is ſo Tranſparent, not to behold it [*Reads.*
Were Blindneſs, and not to reward it Ingratitude.
Goneril.

Enough! Blind, and Ingrateful ſhould I be
Not to obey the Summons of this Oracle.
Now for a Second Letter. [*Opens the other.*
If Modeſty be not your Enemy, doubt not to [*Reads.*
Find me your Friend.
Regan.

Excellent *Sibyl!* O my glowing Blood!
I am already ſick of expectation,
And pant for the Poſſeſſion.——Here *Gloſter* comes
With buſ'neſs on his Brow; be huſht, my Joys.

Gloſt. I come to ſeek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a buſineſs of Importance; I knew thy loyal Heart is touch't to ſee the Cruelty of theſe ingrateful Daughters againſt our royal Maſter.

Baſt. Moſt ſavage and unnatural.

Gloſt. This change in the State ſits uneaſie. The Commons repine aloud at their female Tyrants, already they cry out for the re-inſtalment of their good old King, whoſe Injuries I fear will inflame 'em into Mutiny.

Baſt. 'Tis to be hop'd, not fear'd.

Gloſt. Thou haſt it Boy, 'tis to be hop'd indeed:
On me they caſt their Eyes, and hourly court me
To lead 'em on? and whilſt this Head is mine
I'm theirs. A little covert Craft, my Boy,
And then for open Action; 'twill be Employment
Worthy ſuch honeſt daring Souls as Thine.
Thou, *Edmund*, art my truſty Emiſſary,
Haſte on the Spur at the firſt break of Day — {*Gives him Letters.*
With theſe Diſpatches to the Duke of *Cambray*;
You know what mortal Feuds have always flam'd
Between this Duke of *Cornwal*'s Family, and his;
Full Twenty thouſand Mountaineers
Th' invéterate Prince will ſend to our Aſſiſtance.
Diſpatch; Commend us to his Grace, and proſper.

Baſt. Yes, credulous old Man,
I will commend you to his Grace,
His Grace the Duke of *Cornwal*——inſtantly
To ſhew him theſe Contents in thy own Character,
And Seal'd with thy own Signet; then forthwith
The Chol'rick Duke gives Sentence on thy Life;
And to my Hand thy vaſt Revenues,
To glut my Pleaſure that till now has ſtarv'd.

Gloſter *going off is met by* Cordelia *entring*, Baſtard *obſerving at a Diſtance.*

Cord. Turn, *Gloſter*, Turn, by the ſacred Pow'rs
I do conjure you, give my Griefs a Hearing,
You muſt, you ſhall, nay I am ſure you will,
For you were always ſtyl'd the Juſt and Good.

Gloſt. What wou'dſt thou, Princeſs? riſe, and ſpeak thy Griefs.

Cord. Nay, you ſhall promiſe to redreſs 'em too,
Or here i'll kneel for ever; I entreat
Thy ſuccour for a Father, and a King,
An injur'd Father, and an injur'd King.

Baſt. O Charming Sorrow! how her Tears adorn her,
Like Dew on Flow'rs, but ſhe is vertuous,
And I muſt quench this hopeleſs Fire i' th' Kindling.

Gloſt. Conſider, Princeſs,
For whom thou begg'ſt, 'tis for the King that wrong'd Thee.

Cord. O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.
Nay, muſe not, *Gloſter*, for it is too likely

This

This injur'd King e'er this, is past your Aid,
And gone Distracted with his Savage Wrongs.
Bast. I'll gaze no more,—and yet my Eyes are charm'd.
Cord. Or, what if it be Worse?
As 'tis too probable, this furious Night
Has pierc'd his tender Body, the bleak Winds
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightning struck him Dead;
If it be so, your promise is discharg'd,
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,
That you'd convey me to his breathless Trunk,
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,
Then with a show'r of Tears
To wash his Clay-smear'd Cheeks, and dye beside him.
Glost. Rise, fair *Cordelia*, thou hast Piety
Enough t' attone for both thy Sisters Crimes;
I have already plotted to restore
My injur'd Master, and thy Vertue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly. [*Ex.*
Cord. Dispatch, *Arante*,
Provide me a Disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the King, and bring him some relief.
Ar. How, Madam! Are you ignorant
Of what your impious Sisters have decreed?
Immediate Death for any that relieve him.
Cord. I cannot dread the Furies in this case.
Ar. In such a Night as this? Consider, Madam,
For many Miles about there's scarce a Bush
To shelter in.
Cord. Therefore no shelter for the King,
And more our Charity to find him out:
What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love?
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For Piety as much. Blow Winds, and Lightnings fall,
Bold in my Virgin Innocence, I'll flie
My Royal Father to relieve, or dye. [*Exit.*
Bast. Provide me a disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the King:——Ha! ha! a lucky change,
That Vertue which I fear'd would be my hindrance,
Has proved the Bond to my Design;
I'll bribe two Ruffians shall at distance follow,
And seise 'em in some desert Place; and there
Whilst one retains her t'other shall return
T' inform me where she's Lodg'd; I'll be disguis'd too.
Whilst they are poching for me, I'll to the Duke
With these Dispatches, then to th' Field
Where like the vigr'ous *Jove* I will enjoy

This Semele in a Storm, 'twill deaf her Cries
Like Drums in Battle, leſt her Groans ſhould pierce
My pitying Ear, and make the amorous Night leſs fierce. [Exit.

Storm ſtill. The Field Scene. Enter Lear *and* Kent.

Kent. Here is the place my Lord; good my Lord enter;
The Tyranny of this open Night's too rough
For Nature to endure.
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my Lord; enter.
Lear. Wilt break my Heart?
Kent. Beſeech you, Sir.
Lear. Thou think'ſt 'tis much that this contentious Storm
Invades us to the Skin; ſo 'tis to thee;
But where the greater Malady is fixt,
The leſſer is ſcarce felt: The Tempeſt in my Mind
Does from my Senſes take all feeling elſe
Save what beats there. Filial Ingratitude!
Is it not as this Mouth ſhou'd tear this Hand
For lifting Food to't?——But I'll puniſh; home.
No, I will no more; in ſuch a Night
To ſhut me out.——Pour on, I will endure
In ſuch a Night as this: O *Regan*, *Goneril*!
Your old kind Father, whoſe frank Heart gave all;
O that way madneſs lies; let me ſhun that;
No more of that.
Kent. See, my Lord, here's the Entrance.
Lear. Well, I'll go in
And paſs it all, I'll pray, and then I'll ſleep:
Poor naked Wretches, whereſoe'er you are,
That 'bide the pelting of this pitileſs Storm.
How ſhall your houſeleſs Heads and unfed Sides
Suſtain this Shock? your raggedneſs defend you
From Seaſons ſuch as theſe.
O! I have ta'en too little Care of this,
Take Phyſick, Pomp,
Expoſe thy ſelf to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'ſt caſt the ſuperflux to them,
And ſhew the Heav'ns more juſt.

Edgar *in the Hovel.*

Five Fathom and a half, poor *Tom.*
Kent. What art thou that doſt grumble there i' th' Straw?
Come forth.

Edg.

Edg. Away; The foul Fiend follows me.—Through the ſharp Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind.——Mum, go to the Bed and warm Thee.——Ha! What do I ſee? By all my Griefs the poor old King beheaded,
And drencht in this ſow Storm, profeſſing *Syren*,
Are all your Proteſtations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, Fellow, Did'ſt thou give all to thy Daughters?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor *Tom*, whom the foul Fiend has led thro' Fire, and thro' Flame, thro' Buſhes, and Bogs; that has laid Knives under his Pillow, and Haltars in his Pue; that has made him proud of Heart to ride on a Bay-trotting Horſe over four inch'd Bridges, to courſe his own Shadow for a Traitour—Bleſs thy five Wits. *Tom*'s a cold. [*Shivers.*] Bleſs thee from Whirl-winds, Star-blaſting, and taking: Do poor *Tom* ſome Charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes——Sa, ſa; there I could have him now, and there, and there agen.

Lear. Have his Daughters brought him to this paſs?
Cou'dſt thou ſave nothing? Didſt thou give them all?

Kent. He has no Daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death, Traitor, nothing cou'd have ſubdu'd Nature
To ſuch a Lowneſs, but his unkind Daughters.

Edg. Pillicock ſat upon Pillicock Hill; Hallo, hallo, hallo.

Lear. Is it the faſhion that diſgarded Fathers
Should have ſuch little mercy on their Fleſh?
Judicious puniſhment, 'twas his Fleſh begot
Thoſe Pelicane Daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the ſow Fiend; obey thy Parents; keep thy Word juſtly; ſwear not; commit not with Man's ſworn Spouſe; ſet not thy ſweet Heart on proud Array: *Tom*'s a Cold.

Lear. What haſt thou been?

Edg. A Serving Man proud of Heart, that curl'd my Hair, us'd Perfume and Waſhes; that ſerv'd the Luſt of my Miſtreſſes Heart, and did the Act of Darkneſs with her; ſwore as many Oath's, as I ſpoke Words; and broke them all in the ſweet Face of Heaven: Let not the Paint, nor the Patch, nor the ruſhing of Silks betray thy poor Heart to Woman; keep thy Foot out of Brothels, thy Hand out of Plackets, thy Pen from Creditors Books, and defie the foul Fiend.——Still through the Hawthorn blows the cold Wind.——Seſs, Suum, Mun, Nonny, Dolphin, my Boy!—Hiſt, the Boy the Boy! Seſey! ſoft, let him trot by.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy Grave, than thus to anſwer with thy uncover'd Body, this Extremity of the Sky. And yet conſider him well, and Man's no more than This; Thou art indebted to the Worm for no Silk, to the Beaſt for no Hide, to the Cat for no Perfume.——Ha! here's two of us are ſophiſticated; Thou

art

art the Thing it ſelf unaccomodated Man is no more than ſuch a poor bare forkt Animal as thou art.

Off, Off, ye vain Diſguiſes, empty Lendings,
I'll be my Original Self, quick, quick, uncaſe me.

Kent. Defend his Wits, good Heaven!

Lear. One point I had forgot; what's your Name?

Edg. Poor *Tom*, that eats the ſwimming Frog, the Wall-nut and the Water-nut; that in the fury of his Heart, when the foul Fiend rages, eats Cow-dung for Sallets, ſwallows the old Rat, and the Ditch dog, that drinks the green Mantle of the ſtanding Pool, that's whipt from Tithing to Tithing, that has three Suits to his Back, ſix Shirts to his Body.

Horſe to Ride, and Weapon to wear,
But Rats and Mice, and ſuch ſmall Deer,
Have been *Tom*'s Food for ſeven long Year.

eware, my Follower; Peace, Smulk'n; Peace, thou foul Fiend.

Lear. One word more, but be ſure true Counſel; tell me, Is a Madman a Gentleman, or a Yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd 't wou'd come to this; his Wits are gone.

Edg. Fraterreto calls me, and tells me, *Nero*, is an Angler in the Lake of Darkneſs. Pray, *Innocent*, and beware the foul Fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha! was it not pleaſant to have a Thouſand with red hot Spits come hizzing in upon 'em.

Edg. My Tears begin to take his part ſo much
They mar my Counterfeiting. [*Aſide.*

Lear. The little Dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, ſee they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his Head at 'em; Avant, ye Curs.

Be thy Mouth, or black or white,
Tooth that poiſons if it bite,
Maſtiff, Grey-hound, Mungrel, Grim,
Hound, or Spanial, Brach, or Hym,
Bob-tail, Hight, or Trundle tail,
Tom will make 'em weep and wail,
For with throwing thus my Head,
Dogs leap the Hatch, and all are fled.

Ud, de, de, de, See, ſee, ſee. Come, march to Wakes and Fairs, and Market-towns.—Poor *Tom*, thy horn is dry.

Lear. You, Sir, I entertain you for one of my Hundred, only I do not like the faſhion of your Garments; you'll ſay they're Perſian, but no matter, let 'em be chang'd.

Enter Gloſter.

Edg. This is the foul *Flibertigibet*; he begins at Curfew, and walks at firſt Cock; he gives the Web, and the Pin; knits the Elf-

lock;

lock; ſquints the Eye, and makes the Hair-lip; mildews the white Wheat, and hurts the poor Creature of the Earth;

Swithin footed Thrice the Cold,
He met the Night-mare and her Nine-fold,
'Twas there he did appoint her;
He bid her alight, and her Troth plight,
And arroynt the Witch, arroynt her.

Gloſt. What, has your Grace no better Company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkneſs is a Gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mahu.*

Gloſt. Go with me, Sir, hard by I have a Tenant. My Duty cannot ſuffer me to obey in all your Daughters hard Commands, who have enjoyn'd me to make faſt my Doors, and let this Tyrannous Night take hold upon you. Yet have I ventur'd to come to ſeek you out, and bring you where both Fire and Food is ready.

Kent. Good my Lord, take his offer.

Lear. Firſt let me talk with this Philoſopher, Say, *Staggerite*, what is the cauſe of Thunder.

Gloſt. Beſeech you, Sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll take a Word with this ſame Learned *Thebane.* What is your Study?

Edg. How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill Vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a Word in private.

Kent. His Wits are quite unſettled; Good Sir, let's force him hence.

Gloſt. Canſt blame him? His Daughters ſeek his Death; This Bedlam but diſturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

Edg. Child *Rowland* to the dark Tow'r came,
His Word, was ſtill, Fi, Fo, and Fum,
I ſmell the Blood of a Britiſh Man.—Oh! Torture! [*Exit.*

Gloſt. Now, I prethee Friend, let's take him in our Arms, and carry him where he ſhall meet both Welcome, and Protection. Good Sir, along with us.

Lear. You ſay right; let 'em anatomize *Regan*, for what breeds about her Heart; is there any Cauſe in Nature for theſe hard Hearts?

Kent. Beſeech your Grace.

Lear. Hiſt!—make no Noiſe, make no Noiſe——ſo ſo; we'll to Supper i' th' Morning. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Cordelia *and* Arante.

Ar. Dear Madam, reſt ye here, our ſearch is vain, Look, here's a ſhed; beſeech ye, enter here.

Cord. Prethee go thy ſelf, ſeek thy own Eaſe, Where the Mind's free, the Body's delicate: This Tempeſt but diverts me from the thought Of what would hurt me more.

Enter

Enter two Ruffians.

1. *Ruff.* We have dogg'd 'em far enough, this Place is private,
I'll keep 'em priſoners here within this Hovel,
Whilſt you return and bring Lord *Edmund* hither;
But help me firſt to Houſe 'em.
2. *Ruff.* Nothing but this, dear Devil, [*Shows Gold.*
Shou'd have drawn me through all this Tempeſt;
But to our Work.
[*They ſeiſe* Cordelia *and* Arante, *who ſhriek out.*
Soft, Madam, we are Friends; diſpatch, I ſay.
Cord. Help, Murder, help; Gods! ſome kind Thunderbolt
To ſtrike me dead.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. What Cry was that?——Ha, Women ſeiz'd by Ruffians?
Is this a Place and Time for Villany?
Avaunt, ye Blood-hounds. [*Drives 'em with his Quarter-ſtaff.*
Both. The Devil, the Devil! [*Run off.*
Edg. O ſpeak, what are ye that appear to be
O' th' tender Sex, and yet ungarded wander
Through the dread Mazes of this dreadful Night,
Where (tho' at full) the clouded Moon ſcarce darts
Imperfect Glimmerings?
Cord. Firſt ſay, what art thou?
Our Guardian Angel, that wer't pleas'd t' aſſume
That horrid ſhape to fright the Raviſhers?
We'll kneel to Thee.
Edg. O my tumultuous Blood!
By all my trembling Veins, *Cordelia*'s Voice!
'Tis ſhe her ſelf!——My Senſes ſure conform
To my wild Garb, and I am mad indeed. [*Aſide.*
Cord. What e'er thou art, befriend a wretched Virgin,
And if thou canſt, direct our weary ſearch.
Edg. Who relieves poor *Tom*, that ſleeps on the Nettle, with the Hedg-pig for his Pillow.

Whilſt Smug ply'd the Bellows
She truckt with her Fellows,
The Freckle-fac'd Mab
Was a Blouze, and a Drab,

Yet *Swithin* made *Oberan* jealous——Oh! Torture.
Ar. Alack! Madam a poor wandring Lunatick.

Cord.

Cord. And yet his Language ſeem'd but now well temper'd.
Speak, Friend, to one more wretched than thy ſelf,
And if thou haſte one Interval of ſenſe,
Inform us, if thou canſt, where we may find
A poor old Man, who through this Heath has ſtray'd
The tedious Night.—Speak, ſaweſt thou ſuch a One?
Edg. The King, her Father, whom ſhe's come to ſeek; [*Aſide.*
Through all the Terrors of this Night: O Gods!
That ſuch amazing Piety, ſuch Tenderneſs
Shou'd yet to me be Cruel.———
Yes, fair One, ſuch a One was lately here,
And is convey'd by ſome that came to ſeek him,
To a neighb'ring Cottage; but diſtinctly where,
I know not.
Cord. Bleſſing on 'em,
Lets find him out, *Arante*, for thou ſeeſt
We are in Heavens Protection. [*Going off.*
Edg. O *Cordelia!*
Cord. Ha!——Thou know'ſt my Name.
Edg. As you did once know *Edgar's.*
Cord. Edgar!
Edg. The poor Remains of *Edgar*, what your Scorn
Has left him.
Cord. Do we wake, *Arante?*
Edg. My Father ſeeks my Life, which I preſerv'd
In hopes of ſome bleſt Minute to oblige
Diſtreſt *Cordelia*, and the Gods have giv'n it;
That Thought alone prevail'd with me to take
This Frantick Dreſs, to make the Earth my Bed,
With theſe bare Limbs all change of Seaſons bide,
Noons ſcorching Heat, and Midnights piercing Cold,
To feed on Offals, and to drink with Herds,
To combat with the Winds, and be the Sport
of Clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their Pity.
Ar. Was ever Tale ſo full of Miſery!
Edg. But ſuch a Fall as this I grant was due
To my aſpiring Love, for 'twas preſumptuous,
Though not preſumptuouſly purſu'd;
For well you know I wore my Flames conceal'd,
And ſilent as the Lamps that burn in Tombs,
'Till you perceiv'd my Grief, with modeſt Grace
Drew forth the Secret, and then ſeal'd my Pardon.
Cord. You had your Pardon, nor can you challenge more.
Edg. What do I Challenge more?
Such Vanity agrees not with theſe Rags;
When in my proſp'rous State, rich *Gloſter's* Heir,

You silenc'd my Preferences, and enjoyn'd me
To trouble you upon that Theme no more;
Then what Reception must Loves Language find
From these bare Limbs and Beggars humble Weeds?
Cord. Such as the Voice of Pardon to a Wretch condemn'd;
Such as the Shouts
Of succ'ring Forces to a Town besieg'd.
Edg. Ah! What knew Method now of Cruelty!
Cord. Come to my Arms, thou deareſt, beſt of Men,
And take the kindeſt Vows that e'er were ſpoke
By a proteſting Maid.
Edg. Is't poſſible?
Cord. By the dear Vital Stream that baths my Heart,
Theſe hallowed Rags of Thine, and naked Vertue,
Theſe abject Taſſels, theſe fantaſtick Shreds,
(Ridiculous ev'n to the meaneſt Clown)
To me are dearer than the richeſt Pomp
Of purple Monarchs.
Edg. Generous charming Maid,
The Gods alone that made, can rate thy Worth!
This moſt amazing Excellence ſhall be
Fame's Triumphs in ſucceeding Ages, when
Thy bright Example ſhall adorn the Scene,
And teach the World Perfection.
Cord. Cold and Weary,
We'll reſt a while, *Aronte*, on that Straw,
Then forward to find out the poor Old King.
Edg. Look, I have Flint and Steel, the Implements
Of wandring Lunaticks; I'll ſtrike a Light,
And make a Fire beneath this Shed, to dry
Thy Storm drencht Garments, e'er thou lie to reſt thee,
Then Fierce and Wakeful as th' *Heſperian* Dragon,
I'll watch beſide thee to protect thy Sleep;
Mean while the Stars ſhall dart their kindeſt Beams,
And Angels viſit my *Cordelia*'s Dreams. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.

SCENE, *The Palace.*

Enter Cornwal, Regan, Baſtard, *Servants.* Cornwal *with* Gloſter's *Letters.*

Duke. I will have my Revenge e'er I depart his Houſe.
Regan, ſee here, a Plot upon our State,
'Tis *Gloſter*'s Character, that has betray'd
His double Truſt of Subject, and of Hoſt.
Reg. Then double be our Vengeance, this confirms
Th' Intelligence that we now receiv'd,
That he has been this Night to ſeek the King;
But who, Sir, was the kind diſcoverer?
Duke. Our *Eagle*, quick to ſpy, and fierce to ſeize;
Our truſty *Edmund*.
Reg. 'Twas a noble Service;
O *Cornwall*, take him to thy deepeſt Truſt,
And wear him as a Jewel at thy Heart.
Baſt. Think, Sir, how hard a Fortune I ſuſtain,
That makes me thus repent of ſerving you; [*Weeps.*
O that this Treaſon had not been, or I
Not the Diſcoverer.
Duke. Edmund, Thou ſhalt find
A Father in our Love, and from this Minute
We call thee Earl of *Gloſter*; but there yet
Remains another Juſtice to be done,
And that's to puniſh this diſcarded Traitor;
But leſt thy tender Nature ſhould relent
At his juſt Sufferings, nor brook the Sight,
We wiſh thee to withdraw.
Reg. The *Grotto*, Sir, within the lowet Grove [*To* Edmund *Aſide.*
Has Privacy to ſuit a Mourners Thought:
Baſt. And there I may expect a Comforter,
Ha, Madam?
Reg. What may happen, Sir, I know not,
But 'twas a Friends Advice. [*Ex.* Baſtard.
Duke. Bring in the Traitor.

Gloſter *brought in.*

Bind faſt his Arms.
Gloſt. What mean your Graces?
You are my Gueſts, pray do me no foul Play.
Duke. Bind him, I ſay, hard, harder yet.
Reg. Now Traitor, thou ſhalt find——

Duke. Speak, Rebel, where haſt thou ſent the King?
Whom ſpight of our Decree thou ſaw'ſt laſt Night.
Gloſt. I'm ty'd to th' Stake, and muſt ſtand the Courſe.
Reg. Say where, and why thou haſt conceal'd him?
Gloſt. Becauſe I wou'd not ſee thy cruel Hands
Tear out his poor old Eyes, nor thy fierce Siſter
Carve his anointed Fleſh; but I ſhall ſee
The ſwift wing'd Vengeance overtake ſuch Children.
Duke. See't thou ſhalt never; Slaves perform your Work.
Out with thoſe treacherous Eyes; diſpatch, I ſay,
If thou ſeeſt Vengeance.——
Gloſt. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me ſome help.——O cruel! oh! ye Gods.
[*They put out his Eyes.*
Serv. Hold, hold, my Lord, I bar your Cruelty,
I cannot love your ſafety, and give way
To ſuch a barbarous Practice.
Duke. Ha! my Villain.
Serv. I have been your Servant from my Infancy,
But better Service have I never done you
Than with this Boldneſs.——
Duke. Take thy Death, Slave.
Serv. Nay, then Revenge whilſt yet my Blood is Warm.
[*Fight.*
Reg. Help here.——Are you not hurt my Lord?
Gloſt. Edmund, enkindle all the ſparks of Nature
To quit this horrid Act.
Reg. Out treacherous Villain,
Thou call'ſt on him that hates thee, it was He
That broacht thy Treaſon, ſhew'd us thy Diſpatches;
There,—read, and ſave the *Cambrian* Prince a Labour:
If thy Eyes fail thee, call for Spectacles.
Gloſt. O my Folly!
Then *Edgar*, was abus'd, kind Gods, forgive me that.
Reg. How iſ't, my Lord?
Duke. Turn out that Eye-leſs Villain, let him ſmell
His way to *Cambray*, throw this Slave upon a Dunghil.
Regan. I bleed apace, give me your Arm.
Gloſt. All dark, and comfortleſs!
Where are thoſe various Objects that but now
Employ'd my buſie Eyes? where thoſe Eyes?
Dead are their piercing Rays that lately ſhot
O'er flowry Vales to diſtant ſunny Hills,
And drew with Joy the vaſt Horizon in.
Theſe groping Hands are now my only Guides,
And Feeling all my Sight.

O Miſe-

O Misery! what words can sound my Grief?
Shut from the living whilst amongst the Living;
Dark as the Grave amidst the bustling World.
At once from Business, and from Pleasure barr'd:
No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,
Nor see the Face of Kindred, or of Friend;
Yet still one way th' extreamest Fate affords,
And even the Blind can find the way to Death.
Must I then tamely dye, and unreveng'd?
So *Lear* may fall: No, with these bleeding Rings
I will present me to the pitying Crowd,
And with the Rhetorick of these dropping Veins
Enflame 'em to revenge their King and me;
Then when the Glorious Mischief is on Wing,
This Lumber from some Precipice I'll throw,
And dash it on the ragged Flint below;
Whence my freed Soul to her bright Sphere shall fly,
Through boundless Orbs, eternal Regions spy,
And like the Sun, be all one glorious Eye.

[*Ex.*

End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

A Grotto.

Edmund *and* Regan *amorously Seated, listening to Musick.*

Bast. WHY were those Beauties made another's Right,
which none can prize like Me? Charming Queen,
Take my blooming Youth, for ever fold me
In those soft Arms, Lull me in endless Sleep,
That I may dream of Pleasures too transporting
For Life to bear.

Reg. Live, live my *Gloster*,
And feel no Death but that of swooning joy?
I yield the Blisses on no harder Terms
Than that thou continue to be Happy.

Bast. This Jealousie is yet more kind, is't possible
That I should wander from a Paradise
To feed on sickly Weeds? such Sweets live here
That Constancy will be no virtue in me:
And yet must I forthwith go meet her Sister, [*Aside.*
To whom, I must protest as much,——

Suppose

Suppose it be the same; why, best of all,
And I have then my Lesson already conn'd.
Reg. Wear this Remembrance of me.——I dare now
[*Gives him a Ring.*
Absent my self no longer from the Duke,
Whose Wound grows dangerous, I hope Mortal.
Bast. And let this happy Image of your *Gloster*,
[*Pulling out a Picture, drops a Note.*
Lodge in that Breast where all his Treasure lies. [*Exit.*
Reg. To this brave youth a Woman's blooming Beauties
Are due; my Fool usurps my Bed——What's here?
Confusion on my Eyes. [*Reads.*
Where Merit is Transparent, not to behold it were Blindness; and not to reward it, Ingratitude.
Goneril.
Vexatious Accident! yet Fortunate too,
My Jealousie's confirm'd, and I am taught
To cast for my Defence—— [*Enter an Officer.*
Now, what mean those Shouts? and that thy hasty Entrance?
Off. A most surprizing and a sudden Change,
The Peasants are all up in Mutiny,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.
To storm your Palace.
Reg. On what Provocation?
Off. At last day's publick Festival, to which
The Yeomen from all Quarters had repair'd,
Old *Gloster*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight,
(His Veins yet streaming fresh,) presents himself,
Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppression,
With the King's Injuries; which so enrag'd 'em,
That now that Mutiny which long had crept,
Takes Wing, and threatens your best Pow'rs.
Reg. White-liver'd Slave!
Our Forces rais'd, and led by Valiant *Edmund*,
Shall drive this Monster of Rebellion back
To her dark Cell; young *Gloster*'s Arm allays
The Storm, his Father's feeble Breath did raise. [*Exit.*

The Field SCENE, *Enter* Edgar.

Edg. The lowest and most abject Thing of Fortune
Stands still in Hope, and is secure from Fear;
The lamentable Change is from the Best,
The worst returns to better.——Who comes here?

Enter

Enter Gloſter, *led by an old Man.*

My Father poorly led! depriv'd of Sight!
The precious Stones torn from their bleeding Rings!
Something I heard of this inhumane Deed,
But disbeliev'd it, as an Act too horrid
For the hot Hell of a curſt Woman's fury;
When will the meaſure of my woes be full?

Gloſt. Revenge, thou art on foot, Succeſs attend Thee.
Well have I ſold my Eyes, if the Event
Prove happy for the injur'd King.

Old M. O, my good Lord, I have been your Tenant, and your Father's Tenant theſe Fourſcore years.

Gloſt. Away, get thee away, good Friend be gone,
Thy Comforts can do me no good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot ſee your way.

Gloſt. I have no way, and therefore want no Eyes,
I ſtumbled when I ſaw: O dear Son *Edgar*,
The Food of thy abuſed Father's Wrath,
Might I but live to ſee thee in my Touch,
I'd ſay, I had Eyes agen.

Edg. Alas, he's ſenſible that I was wrong'd,
And ſhou'd I own my Self his tender Heart
Would break betwixt the extreams of Grief and Joy.

Old M. How now, who's there?

Edg. A Charity for poor *Tom*. Play fair, and defie the foul Fiend.
O Gods! and muſt I ſtill purſue this Trade, [*Aſide.*
Trifling beneath ſuch loads of Miſery?

Old M. 'Tis poor mad *Tom*.

Gloſt. In the late Storm, I ſuch a Fellow ſaw,
Which made me think a Man a Worm,
Where is the Lunatick?

Old M. Here, my Lord.

Gloſt. Get thee now away, if for my ſake
Thou wilt o'er-take us hence a Mile or Two,
I' th' way tow'rd *Dover*, do't for ancient Love,
And bring ſome cov'ring for this naked Wretch
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my Lord, He's Mad.

Gloſt. 'Tis the Time's Plague when Mad-men lead the Blind,
Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the beſt 'Parrel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Gloſt. Sirrah, naked Fellow.

Edg.

Edg. Poor *Tom*'s cold;——I cannot fool it longer,
And yet I muſt.——Bleſs thy ſweet Eyes, they Bleed;
Believe't poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his blind to ſee 'em.
Gloſt. Know'ſt thou the way to *Dover*?
Edg. Both Stile and Gate, Horſe-way and Foot-path; poor *Tom* has been ſcar'd out of his good Wits; bleſs every true Man's Son from the foul Fiend.
Gloſt. Here, take this Purſe; that I am wretched
Makes thee happier, Heav'n deal ſo ſtill.
Thus let the griping Uſurers Hoard be ſcatter'd,
So diſtribution ſhall undo Exceſs,
And each Man have enough. Doſt thou know *Dover*?
Edg. Ay, Maſter.
Gloſt. There's a Cliff, whoſe high and bending Head
Looks dreadfully down on the roaring Deep;
Bring me but to the very Brink of it,
And I'll repair the Poverty thou bear'ſt
With ſomething Rich about me, from that Place
I ſhall no leading need.
Edg. Give me thy Arm: poor *Tom* ſhall guide thee.
Gloſt. Soft, for I hear the Tread of Paſſengers.

Enter Kent *and* Cordelia.

Cord. Ah me! your Fear's too true, it was the King;
I ſpoke but now with ſome that met him
As mad as the vext Sea ſinging aloud,
Crown'd with rank Femiter, and Furrow Weeds,
With Berries, Burdocks, Violets, Dazies, Poppies,
And all the idle Flowers that grow
In our ſuſtaining Corn; conduct me to him,
And Heav'n ſo proſper thee.
Kent. I will good Lady.
Ha, *Gloſter* here!—Turn, poor dark Man, and hear
A Friend's Condolement, who at ſight of thine
Forgets his own Diſtreſs, thy old true *Kent*.
Gloſt. How, *Kent*? From whence return'd?
Kent. I have not ſince my Baniſhment been abſent,
But in Diſguiſe follow'd th' abandon'd King:
'Twas me thou ſaw'ſt with him in the late Storm.
Gloſt. Let me embrace thee, had I Eyes, I now
Should weep for Joy; but let this trickling Blood
Suffice inſtead of Tears.
Cord. O Miſery!
To whom ſhall I complain, or in what Language?
Forgive, O wretched Man, the Piety
That brought thee to this paſs; 'twas I that cauſ'd it;

I caſt

I caſt me at thy feet and beg of thee
To cruſh theſe weeping Eyes to equal Darkneſs,
If that will give thee any Recompence.
Edg. Was every Seaſon ſo diſtreſt as This? [*Aſide.*
Gloſt. I think *Cordelia's* Voice! riſe pious Princeſs,
And take a dark Man's Bleſſing.
Cord. O, my *Edgar!*
My Vertue's now grown guilty, works the Bane
Of thoſe that do befriend me, Heav'n forſakes me,
And when you look that Way, it is but juſt
That you ſhou'd hate me too.
Edg. O wave this cutting Speech, and ſpare to wound
A Heart that's on the Rack.
Gloſt. No longer cloud thee, *Kent* in that diſguiſe,
There's buſineſs for thee, and of nobleſt weight;
Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,
Urg'd by the Kings inhumane Wrongs and Mine,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.
That task be thine.
Edg. Brave *Britains*, then there's Life in't yet. [*Aſide.*
Kent. Then have we one caſt for our Fortune yet.
Come, Princeſs, I'll beſtow you with the King,
Then on the Spur to head theſe Forces,
Farewel, good *Gloſter*, to our conduct truſt.
Gloſt. And be your Cauſe as Proſp'rous as 'tis Juſt. [*Exeunt.*

Goneril's *Palace.* *Enter* Goneril, *Attendants.*

Gon. It was great Ignorance, *Gloſter's* Eyes being out,
To let him live, where he arrives he moves
All Hearts againſt us; *Edmund* I think is gone,
In pity to his Miſery, to diſpatch him.
Gent. No, Madam, he's return'd on ſpeedy Summons
Back to your Siſter.
Gon. Ha! I like not That,
Such ſpeed muſt have the Wings of Love; where's *Albany?*
Gent. Madam, within, but never Man ſo chang'd;
I told him of the uproar of the Peaſants,
He ſmil'd at it, when I inform'd him
Of *Gloſter's* Treaſon.———
Gon. Trouble him no farther,
It is his coward Spirit; back to our Siſter,
Haſten he Muſters, and let her know
I have giv'n the Diſtaff into my Husbands Hands.
That done, with ſpecial Care deliver theſe Diſpatches
In private to young *Gloſter.*

Enter a Meſſenger.

Meſſ. O Madam, moſt unſeaſonable News,
The Duke of *Cornwal's* dead of his late Wound,
Whoſe loſs your Siſter has in part ſupply'd,
Making brave *Edmund* General of her Forces.
Gon. One way I like this well;
But being Widow, and my *Gloſter* with her,
May blaſt the promis'd Harveſt of our Love.
A word more, Sir, ——add ſpeed to your Journey,
And if you chance to meet with that blind Traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [*Ex.*

The Field SCENE, Gloſter *and* Edgar.

Gloſt. When ſhall we come to th' Top of that ſame Hill?
Edg. We climb it now, mark how we labour.
Gloſt. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible Steep; heark, do you hear the Sea?
Gloſt. No truly,
Edg. Why then your other Senſes grow imperfect
By your Eyes Anguiſh.
Gloſt. So may it be indeed.
Methinks thy Voice is alter'd, and thou ſpeak'ſt
In better Phraſe and Matter than thou did'ſt.
Edg. You are much deceiv'd, in nothing I am alter'd
But in my Garments.
Gloſt. Methinks y' are better ſpoken.
Edg. Come on, Sir, here's the Place, how fearful
And dizzy 'tis to caſt one's Eyes ſo low.
The Crows and Coughs that Wing the mid-way Air
Shew ſcarce ſo big as Beetles, half way down
Hangs one that gathers Samphire, dreadful Trade!
The Fiſhermen that walk upon the Beach
Appear like Mice, and yon tall anch'ring Barque
Seems leſſen'd to her Cock, her Cock a Buoy
Almoſt too ſmall for Sight; the murmuring Surge
Cannot be heard ſo high, I'll look no more
Leſt my Brain turn, and the diſorder make me
Tumble down head-long.
Gloſt. Set me where you ſtand.
Edg. You are now within a Foot of th' extream Verge,
For all beneath the Moon I wou'd not now
Leap forward.

Gloſt. Let go my Hand,
Here, Friend, is another Purſe, in it a Jewel
Well worth a poor Man's taking; get thee farther,
Bid me Farewel, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Fare you well, Sir,——That I do trifle thus
With this his Deſpair, is with Deſign to cure it.
Gloſt. Thus, mighty Gods, this World I do renounce,
And in your Sight ſhake my Afflictions off;
If I cou'd bear 'em longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great oppoſeleſs Wills,
My Snuff and feebler part of Nature ſhou'd
Burn it ſelf out; if *Edgar* liv'd, O, Bleſs him.
Now, Fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone, Sir, Farewell.
And yet I know not how Conceit may Rob
The Treaſury of Life, had he been where he thought,
By this had Thought been paſt.——Alive, or Dead?
Hoa, Sir, Friend; hear you, Sir, Speak.——
Thus might he paſs indeed,——yet he revives.
What are you, Sir?
Gloſt. Away, and let me dye.
Edg. Haſt thou been ought but Goſmore Feathers, Air,
Falling ſo many Fathom down,
Thou hadſt ſhiver'd like an Egg; but thou doſt breath,
Haſt heavy Subſtance, bleed'ſt? Not ſpeak! Art ſound?
Thy Life's a Miracle.
Gloſt. But have I fain or no?
Edg. From the dread Summet of this chalky Bourn;
Look up, an Height, the Shrill-tun'd Lark ſo high
Cannot be ſeen, or heard; do but look up.
Gloſt. Alack, I have no Eyes.
Is wretchedneſs depriv'd that Benefit
To end it ſelf by Death?
Edg. Give me your Arm.
Up; ſo, how is't? Feel you your Legs? You ſtand.
Gloſt. Too well, too well.
Edg. Upon the Brow o'th' Cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?
Gloſt. A poor unfortunate Beggar.
Edg. As I ſtood here below, methought his Eyes
Were two full Moons, wide Noſtrils breathing Fire,
It was ſome Fiend, therefore thou happy Father,
Think that th' all-powerful Gods, who make them Honours
of Mens Impoſſibilities, have preſerv'd thee.
Gloſt. 'Tis wonderful; henceforth I'll bear Affliction
'Till it expire; the Goblin which you ſpeak of,

I took for a Man: oft-times 'twould ſay,
The Fiend, the Fiend: He led me to that Place.
Edg. Bear free and patient Thoughts: but who comes here?

Enter Lear, *a Coronet of Flowers on his Head; Wreaths, and Garlands about him.*

Lear. No, no; they cannot touch me for Coyning; I am the King himſelf.
Edg. O piercing Sight.
Lear. Nature's above Art in that Reſpect; There's your Preſs-money: That Fellow handles his Bow like a Cow-keeper:——— Draw me a Clothier's Yard. A Mouſe, a Mouſe, peace, hoa! There's my Gauntlet; I'll prove it on a Giant: Bring up the brown Bills: O well flown Bird; i'th' White, i'th' White.——Heugh! give the Word.
Edg. Sweet *Marjorum.*
Lear. Paſs.
Gloſt. I know that Voice.
Lear. Ha! *Goneril* with a white Beard! they flatter'd me like a Dog, and told me I had white hairs on my Chin, before the black ones were there: to ſay ay and no to every thing that I ſaid: Ay and no too was no good Divinity. When the Rain came once to wet me, and the Winds to make me chatter; when the Thunder wou'd not peace at my Bidding. There I found 'em, there I ſmelt 'em out; go too, they are not Men of their Words; they told me I was a King; 'tis a Lye, I am not Ague proof.
Gloſt. That Voice I well remember, it's not the King's?
Lear. Ay, every Inch a King, when I do ſtare
See how the Subject quakes.
I pardon that Man's Life; what was the Cauſe?
Adultery? Thou ſhalt not dye. Dye for Adultery!
The Wren groes to't, and the ſmall gilded Flie
Engenders in my Sigh't; Let Copulation thrive;
For *Gloſter*'s Baſtard Son was kinder to his Father
Than were my Daughters got i'th' Lawful Bed.
To't Luxury, Pell-mell, for I lack Soldiers.
Gloſt. Not all my Sorrows paſt ſo deep have toucht me,
As the ſad Accents: Sight were now a Torment.———
Lear. Behold that ſimp'ring Lady, ſhe that ſtarts
At Pleaſures Name, and thinks her Ear profan'd
With the leaſt wanton Word; wou'd you believe it,
The Fitcher, nor the pamper'd Steed goes to't
With ſuch a riotous Appetite: Down from the Waſte they are Centaurs, though Women all above; but to the Girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends; There's Hell, there's

Dark-

Darkneſs, the ſulphurous unfathom'd ——— Fie! fie! pah! ———an Ounce of Civet, good Apothecary, to ſweeten my Imagination.——There's Money for thee.

Gloſt. Let me kiſs that Hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it firſt; it ſmells of Mortality.

Gloſt. Speak, Sir, Do you know me?

Lear. I remember thy Eyes well enough: Nay, do thy worſt, blind *Cupid*. I'll not love--Read me this Challenge, mark but the penning of it.

Gloſt. Were all the Letters Suns, I could not ſee.

Edg. I wou'd not take this from Report; wretched *Cordelia*? What will thy Vertue do when thou ſhalt find
This freſh Affliction added to the Tale
Of thy unparalell'd Griefs.

Lear. Read.

Gloſt. What! with this caſe of Eyes?

Lear. O ho! Are you there with me? No Eyes in your Head, and no Money in your Purſe? Yet you ſee how this World goes.

Gloſt. I ſee it feelingly.

Lear. What! Art Mad? A Man may ſee how this World goes with no Eyes. Look with thy Ears; ſee how yond Juſtice rails on that ſimple Thief; ſhake 'em together, and the firſt that drops, be it Th ef or Juſtice, is a Villain.——Thou haſt ſeen a Farmer's Dog bark at a Beggar.

Gloſt. Ay, Sir.

Lear. And the Man ran from the Curr; there thou migh'ſt behold the great Image of Authority; a Dog's obey'd in Office. Thou Raſcal, Beadle, hold up thy bloody Hand, Why doſt thou laſh that Strumpet? Thou hotly luſt'ſt to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whip'ſt her; do, do, the Judge that Sentenc'd her has been before-hand with thee.

Gloſt. How ſtiff is my vile Senſe, that yields not yet?

Lear. I tell thee the Uſurer hangs the Couz'ner, through tatter'd Robes ſmall Vices do appear; Robes, and Furr-gowns hide All:- Place Sins with Gold; why there 'tis for thee, my Friend, make much of it; it has the Pow'r to ſeal the Accuſer's Lips. Get thee glaſs Eyes, and like a ſcurvy Politician, ſeem to ſee the Things thou doſt not. Pull, pull off my Boots; hard, harder; ſo, ſo.

Gloſt. O Matter and Impertinency mixt?
Reaſon in Madneſs.

Lear. If thou wilt weep my Fortunes, take my Eyes,
I know thee well enough, thy Name is *Gloſter*.
Thou muſt be patient, we come Crying hither
Thou know'ſt, the firſt time that we taſt the Air
We Wail and Cry,———I'll preach to thee, Mark:-

Edg. Break lab'ring Heart.

Lear.

Lear. When we are born we Cry that we are come
To this great Stage of Fools.——

Enter Two or Three Gentlemen.

Gent. O! here he is; lay hand upon him Sir:
Your deareſt Daughter ſends——

Lear. No Reſcue? What! a Priſoner? I am even the natural Fool of Fortune: Uſe me well, you ſhall have Ranſom—Let me have Surgeons? O! I am cut to th' Brains.

Gent. You ſhall have any Thing.

Lear. No Second's? All my Self? I will dye bravely like a ſmug Bridegroom, fluſht and pamper'd as a Prieſt's Whore. I am a King, my Maſters, know ye that?

Gent. You are a Royal one, and we obey you?

Lear. It were an excellent Stratagem to ſhoe a Troop of Horſe with Felt, I'll put in proof——on Noiſe, no Noiſe.——Now will we ſteal upon theſe Sons-in-Law, and then—Kill, kill, kill, kill! [*Ex. Running.*

Gloſt. A Sight moſt moving in the meaneſt Wretch,
Paſt ſpeaking in a King. Now, good Sir, what are you?

Edg. A moſt poor Man made tame to Fortune's ſtrokes,
And prone to pity by experienc'd Sorrows; give me your Hand.

Gloſt. You ever gentle Gods take my Breath from me,
And let not my ill Genius tempt me more
To dye before you pleaſe.

Enter Goneril's *Gentleman-Uſher.*

Gent. A proclaim'd Prize, O moſt happily met,
That Eye-leſs Head of thine was firſt fram'd Fleſh
To raiſe my Fortunes; Thou old unhappy Traitor,
The Sword is out that muſt deſtroy thee.

Gloſt. Now let thy friendly Hand put ſtrength enough to't.

Gent. Wherefore, bold Peaſant,
Dar'ſt thou ſupport a publiſht Traitor? Hence,
Leſt I deſtroy Thee too. Let go his Arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, Zir, without 'vurther 'Caſion.

Gent. Let go, Slave, or thou dyeſt.

Edg. Good Gentleman go your Gate, and let poor Volk paſs; and 'Chu'd ha' bin' Zwagger'd out of my Life, it wou'd not a bin zo long as 'tis by a Vortnight.——Nay, an' thou com'ſt near th' old Man, I'ſt try whether your Coſtard or my Ballow be th' harder.

Gent. Out Dunghill.

Edg. 'Chill pick your Teeth, Zir; Come, no matter Voines.

Gent. Slave, thou haſt Slain me; Oh untimely Death!

Edg.

Edg. I know thee well a ſerviceable Villain,
As duteous to the Vices of thy Miſtreſs,
As Luſt cou'd wiſh.
Gloſt. What! is he Dead?
Edg. Sit you, Sir, and reſt you.
This is a Letter-Carrier, and may have
Some Papers of Intelligence, that may ſtand
Our Party in good ſtead to know.—What's here?
[*Takes a Letter out of his Pocket, opens, and reads*
To *Edmund* Earl of *Gloſter*.
Let our Mutual Loves be remembred, you have many opportunities to cut him off. If he return the Conqueror, then I am ſtill a Priſoner, and his Bed my Goal; from the loath'd Warmth of which deliver me, and ſupply the Place for your Labour.
Goneril.
A Plot upon her Husband's Life,
And the Exchange my Brother!——Here i'th' Sands
I'll rake thee up, thou Meſſenger of Luſt,
Griev'd only that thou hadſt no other Deaths-man.
In Time and Place convenient I'll produce
Theſe Letters to the ſight of th' injur'd Duke,
As beſt ſhall ſerve our Purpoſe; Come, your Hand.
Far off methinks I hear the beaten Drum,
Come, Sir, I will beſtow you with a Friend. [*Exeunt.*

A Chamber. Lear *a Sleep on a Couch*; Cordelia, *and Attendants ſtanding by him.*

Cord. His Sleep is ſound, and may have good Effect
To cure his jarring Senſes, and repair
This Breach of Nature.
Phyſ. We have employ'd the utmoſt Pow'r of Art,
And this deep Reſt will perfect our Deſign.
Cord. O *Regan*, *Goneril*! Inhumane Siſters,
Had he not been your Father, theſe white Hairs
Had challeng'd ſure ſome pity? Was this a Face
To be expos'd againſt the jarring Winds?
My Enemy's Dog though he had bit me ſhou'd
Have ſtood that Night againſt my Fire—he wakes, ſpeak to him.
Gent. Madam, do you, 'tis fitteſt.
Cord. How do's my Royal Lord? How fares your Majeſty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' Grave.
Ha! Is this too a World of Cruelty?
I know my Privilege, think not that I will
Be us'd like a wretched Mortal? no,
No more of That.
Cord. Speak to me, Sir, whom am I?

Lear. You are a Soul in Bliſs, but I am bound
Upon a Wheel of Fire, which my own Tears
Do ſcald like Molten Lead.
Cord. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a Spirit, I know; where did you dye?
Cord. Still, ſtill, far wide.
Phyſ. Madam he's ſcarce awake; he'll ſoon grow more compos'd.
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair Day-Light!
I am mightily abus'd, I ſhou'd even dye with pity
To ſee another thus. I will not ſwear
Theſe are my Hands.
Cord. O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your Hands in Bleſſing o'er me; nay,
You muſt not kneel.
Lear. Pray do not mock me.
I am a very fooliſh fond old Man,
Fourſcore and upward; and to deal plainly with you,
I fear I am not in my perfect Mind.
Cord. Nay, then farewel to Patience: witneſs for me
Ye mighty Pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd till now!
Lear. Methinks I ſhou'd know you and know this Man,
Yet I am doubtful, for I am mainly ignorant
What Place this is, and all the ſkill I have
Remembers not theſe Garments; nor do I know
Where I did ſleep laſt Night.——Pray do not mock me——
For, as I am a Man, I think that Lady
To be my Child *Cordelia.*
Cord. O my dear, dear Father!
Lear. Be your Tears wet? Yes faith; pray do not Weep,
I know I have giv'n thee Cauſe, and am ſo humbled
With Croſſes ſince, that I cou'd ask
Forgiveneſs of thee, were it poſſible
That thou cou'dſt grant it; but I'm well aſſur'd
Thou can'ſt not; therefore I do ſtand thy Juſtice;
If thou haſt Poiſon for me I will drink it,
Bleſs thee, and dye.
Cord. O pity, Sir, a bleeding Heart, and ceaſe
This killing Language.
Lear. Tell me, Friends, where am I?
Gent. In your own Kingdom, Sir.
Lear. Do not abuſe me.
Gent. Be comforted, good Madam, for the Violence
Of his Diſtemper's paſt; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, till he is better ſettled.
Wil't pleaſe you, Sir, walk into freer Air?

Lear. You muſt bear with me, I am Old and Fooliſh. [*They lead him off.*

Cord. The Gods reſtore you—Heark, I hear afar
The beaten Drum, Old *Kent*'s a Man of's Word.
O for an Arm
Like the fierce Thunderers, when the Earth born Sons
Storm'd Heav'n to fight this injur'd Father's Battle!
That I cou'd ſhift my Sex, and die me deep
In his oppoſer's Blood! But as I may,
With Womens Weapons, Piety and Pray'rs,
I'll aid his Cauſe——You never erring Gods
Fight on his Side, and Thunder on his Foes
Such Tempeſts as his poor ag'd Head ſuſtain'd;
Your Image ſuffers when a Monarch bleeds.
'Tis your own Cauſe, for that your Succours bring,
Revenge your ſelves, and right an injur'd King.

The End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE, *A Camp.*

Enter Goneril *and Attendants.*

Gon. OUR Siſter's Pow'rs already are arriv'd,
And ſhe her ſelf has promis'd to prevent
The Night with her Approach: Have you provided
The Banquet I beſpoke for her Reception
At my Tent?

Att. So, pleaſe your Grace, we have.

Gon. But thou, my Priſoner, muſt prepare the Bowl
That Crowns this Banquet, when our Mirth is high,
The Trumpets ſounding, and the Flutes replying,
Then is the Time to give this fatal Draught
To this imperious Siſter; if then our Arms ſucceed,
Edmund, more dear than Victory, is mine.
But if Defeat or Death it ſelf attend me,
'Twill charm my Ghoſt to think I've left behind me,
No happy Rival. Heark, ſhe comes. [*Trumpet.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter Baſtard *in his Tent.*

Baſt. To both theſe Siſters have I ſworn my Love,
Each jealous of the other, as the Stung
Are of the Adder; neither can be held
If both remain alive; Where ſhall I fix?
Cornwal is Dead, and *Regan*'s empty Bed
Seems caſt by Fortune for me, but already

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Are of the Adder; neither can be held
If both remain alive; Where ſhall I fix?
Cornwal is Dead, and *Regan*'s empty Bed
Seems caſt by Fortune for me, but already

I have enjoy'd her, and bright *Goneril*
With equal Charms brings dear Variety,
And yet untaſted Beauty: I will uſe
Her Husband's Countenance for the Battel, then
Uſurp at once his Bed and Throne,
My truſty Scouts y'are well return'd; Have ye deſcry'd
The ſtrength and poſture of the Enemy?
Off. We have, and were ſurpriz'd to find
The baniſh'd *Kent* return'd, and at their Head;
Your Brother *Edgar* on the Rear; old *Gloſter*
(A moving Spectacle) led through their Ranks,
Whoſe powerful Tongue, and more prevailing Wrongs,
Have ſo enrag'd their ruſtick Spirits, that with
Th' approaching Dawn we muſt expect their Battel.
Baſt. You bring a welcome Hearing; Each to his Charge.
Line well your Ranks, and ſtand on your Award,
To Night repoſe you, and i'th' Morn we'll give
The Sun a Sight that ſhall be worth his Riſing. [*Exeunt.*

[*Enter Officers.*

SCENE, *A Valley near the Camp.*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloſter.

Edg. Here, Sir, take you the ſhadow of this Tree
For your good Hoſt; pray that the Right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again
I'll bring you Comfort. [*Exit.*
Gloſt. Thanks, friendly, Sir;
The Fortune your good Cauſe deſerves betide you.
An Alarm; after which Gloſter *ſpeaks.*
The Fight grows hot; the whole War's now at Work,
And the goar'd Battel bleeds in every Vein,
Whilſt Drums and Trumpets drown loud Slaughter's Roar:
Where's *Gloſter* now that us'd to head the Fray,
And ſcour the ranks where deadlieſt danger lay?
Here like a Shepherd in a lonely Shade,
Idle, unarm'd, and liſtening to the Fight;
Yet the diſabled Courſer, Maim'd and Blind,
When to the Stall he hears the rattling War,
Foaming with Rage, tears up the batter'd Ground,
And tugs for Liberty.
No more of Shelter, thou blind Worm, but forth
To th' open Field; the War may come this way
And cruſh thee into Reſt——Here lie thee down,
And tear the Earth, that work befits a Mole.
O dark Deſpair! When, *Edgar*, wilt thou come
To pardon, and diſmiſs me to the Grave? [*A Retreat ſounded.*
Heark!

Heark! a Retreat, the King has loſt or won.

Re-enter Edgar, *bloody.*

Edg. Away, old Man, give me your Hand, away!
King *Lear* has loſt; He and his Daughter ta'en,
And this, ye Gods, is all that I can ſave
Of this moſt precious Wreck; give me your Hand.

Gloſt. No farther, Sir, a Man may rot even here.

Edg. What! In ill Thought's again? Men muſt endure
There going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.

Gloſt. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*

Flouriſh. Enter in Conqueſt, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Baſtard——Lear, Kent, Cordelia, *Priſoners.*

Alb. It is enough to have Conquer'd, Cruelty
Shou'd ne'er ſurvive the Fight, Captain o'th' Guards,
Treat well your Royal Priſoners till you have
Our farther Orders, as you hold our Pleaſure.

Gon. Heark! Sir, not as you hold our Husband's pleaſure.
[*To the Captain aſide.*
But as you hold your Life, diſpatch your Pris'ners.
Our Empire can have no ſure Settlement
But in their Death, the Earth that covers them
Binds faſt our Throne. Let me hear they are Dead.

Capt. I ſhall obey your Orders.

Baſt. Sir, I approve it ſafeſt to pronounce
Sentence of Death upon this wretched King,
Whoſe Age has Charms in it, his Title more,
To draw the Commons once more to his Side,
'Twere beſt prevent.——

Alb. Sir, by your Favour,
I hold you but a Subject of this War,
Not as a Brother.

Reg. That's as we liſt to Grace him.
Have you forgot that he did lead our Pow'rs;
Bore the Commiſſion of our Place and Perſon?
And that Authority may well ſtand up,
And call it ſelf your Brother.

Gon. Not ſo hot,
In his own Merits he exalts himſelf
More than in your Addition.

Enter Edgar *diſguiſed.*

Alb. What art thou?

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, that I preſume to ſtop
A Prince and Conqueror, yet e'er you Triumph,
Give Ear to what a Stranger can deliver
Of what concerns you more than Triumph can:
I do impeach your General there of Treaſon,

Lord *Edmund*, that uſurps the Name of *Gloſter*,
Of fouleſt Practice 'gainſt your Life and Honour;
This Charge is True, and wretched though I ſeem,
I can produce a Champion that will prove
In ſingle Combat what I do avouch;
If *Edmund* dares but truſt his Cauſe and Sword.

Baſt. What will not *Edmund* dare! my Lord, I beg
The favour that you'd inſtantly appoint
The Place where I may meet this Challenger,
Whom I will ſacrifice to my wrong'd Fame;
Remember, Sir, that injur'd Honour's nice
And cannot brook delay.

Alb. Anon, before our Tent, i'th' Army's view,
There let the Herald cry.

Edg. I thank your Highneſs in my Champion's Name,
He'll wait your Trumpet's call.

Alb. Lead. [*Exeunt.*

Manent Lear, Kent, Cordelia, *guarded.*

Lear. O *Kent*, *Cordelia!*
You are the only Pair that I e'er wrong'd,
And the juſt Gods have made you Witneſſes
Of my Diſgrace, the very ſhame of Fortune,
To ſee me chain'd and ſhackled at theſe years!
Yet were you but Spectators of my Woes,
Not fellow-ſufferers, all were well!

Cord. This Language, Sir, adds yet to our Affliction.

Lear. Thou, *Kent*, didſt head the Troops that fought my Battel,
Expos'd thy Life and Fortunes for a Maſter
That had (as I remember) baniſht Thee.

Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your Orders,
Baniſht by you, I kept me here diſguis'd
To watch your Fortunes, and protect your Perſon;
You know you entertain'd a rough blunt Fellow,
One *Cajus*, and you thought he did you Service.

Lear. My truſty *Cajus*, I have loſt him too! [*Weeps.*
'Twas a rough Honeſty.

Kent. I was that *Cajus*.
Diſguis'd in that courſe Dreſs, to follow you.

Lear. My *Cajus* too! wer't thou my truſty *Cajus*?
Enough, enough.——

Cord. Ah me, he faints! his Blood forſakes his Cheek,
Help, *Kent*.——

Lear. No, no, they ſhall not ſee us weep,
We'll ſee them rot firſt—Guards, lead away to Priſon;
Come *Kent*, *Cordelia*, come;

We

We two will ſit alone, like Birds i'th' Cage,
When thou doſt ask me Bleſſing, I'll kneel down
And ask of Thee Forgiveneſs; Thus we'll live,
And pray, and ſing, and tell old Tales, and laugh
At gilded Butter-flies, hear Sycophants
Talk of Court News, and we'll talk with them too,
Who loſes, and who wins, who's in, and who's out,
And take upon us the Myſtery of Things
As if we were Heav'ns Spies.
Cord. Upon ſuch Sacrifices
The Gods themſelves throw Incenſe.
Lear. Have I caught ye?
He that parts us muſt bring a Brand from Heav'n:
Together we'll out-toil the ſpight of Hell,
And dye the Wonders of the World; Away.
[*Exeunt, guarded.*

Flouriſh. Enter before the Tents, Albany, Goneril, Regan, *Guards and Attendants;* Goneril *ſpeaking a part to the Captain of the Guards entring.*

Gon. Here's Gold for Thee, Thou know'ſt our late Command
Upon your Pris'ners Lives; about it ſtreight, and at
Our Ev'ning Banquet let it raiſe our Mirth,
To hear that they are Dead.
Capt. I ſhall not fail your Orders. [*Ex.*

Albany, Gon. Reg. *take their Seats.*

Alb. Now, *Gloſter*, truſt to thy ſingle Vertue, for thy Soldiers
All levied in my Name, have in my Name
Took their Diſcharge; now let our Trumpets ſpeak,
And Herald read out this. [*Herald Reads.*

If any Man of Quality, within the Liſts of the Army, will maintain upon Edmund, *ſuppos'd Earl of* Gloſter, *that he is a manifold Traitour, let him appear by the third ſound of the Trumpet; He is bold in his defence——— Agen, Agen.*
[*Trumpets anſwers from within.*

Enter Edgar *arm'd.*

Alb. Lord *Edgar!*
Baſt. Ha! my Brother!
This is the only Combatant that I cou'd fear;
For in my Breaſt Guilt Duels on his ſide,
But, Conſcience, what have I to do with Thee?

Awe

Awe Thou thy dull legitimate Slaves, but I
Was a born Libertine, and ſo I keep me.
Edg. My noble Prince, a word;—e'er we engage
Into your Highneſs's Hands I give this Paper,
It will the truth of my Impeachment prove,
Whatever be my fortune in the Fight.
Alb. We ſhall purſue it.
Edg. Now, *Edmund*, draw thy Sword,
That if my ſpeech has wrong'd a Noble Heart,
Thy Arm may do thee Juſtice: Here i'th' preſence
Of this high Prince, theſe Queens, and this crown'd Liſt,
I brand thee with the ſpotted Name of Traitor,
Falſe to thy Gods, thy Father, and thy Brother,
And what is more, thy Friend; falſe to this Prince:
If then thou ſhar'ſt a ſpark of *Gloſter*'s Vertue,
Acquit thy ſelf; or if thou ſhar'ſt his Courage,
Meet this defiance bravely.
Baſt. And dares *Edgar*,
The beaten routed *Edgar*, brave his Conquerour?
From all thy Troops and Thee I forc'd the Field,
Thou haſt loſt the gen'ral Stake, and art thou now
Come with thy petty ſingle Stock to play
This after-game?
Edg. Half-blooded Man,
Thy Father's Sin firſt, then his Puniſhment;
The dark and vicious Place where he begot thee
Coſt him his Eyes; from thy licentious Mother
Thou draw'ſt thy Villany; but for thy part
Of *Gloſter*'s Blood, I hold thee worth my Sword.
Baſt. Thou bear'ſt Thee on thy Mother's Piety,
Which I deſpiſe; thy Mother being chaſte
Thou art aſſur'd Thou art but *Gloſter*'s Son;
But mine, diſdaining Conſtancy, leaves me
To hope that I am ſprung from nobler Blood,
And poſſible a King might be my Sire:
But be my Birth's uncertain Chance as 'twill,
Who 'twas that had the hit to Father me
I know not; 'tis enough that I am I:
Of this one thing I'm certain,——that I have
A daring Soul, and ſo have at thy Heart.
Sound Trumpet. [*Fight*, Baſtard *falls*.
Gon. And *Reg.* Save him, ſave him.
Gon. This was Practice, *Gloſter*,
Thou won'ſt the Field, and waſt not bound to Fight
A vanquiſh't Enemy. Thou art not Conquer'd,
But couz'ned and betray'd.

Alb.

Alb. Shut your Mouth, Lady,
Or with this Paper I ſhall ſtop it.——Hold, Sir,
Thou worſe than any Name, read thy own evil:
No Tearing, Lady, I perceive you know it.
Gon. Say, if I do, who ſhall arraign me for't?
The Laws are Mine, not Thine.
Alb. Moſt monſtrous! Ha! Thou know'ſt it too?
Baſt. Ask me not what I know,
I have not breath to anſwer idle Queſtions
Alb. I have reſolv'd——your Right, brave Sir, has conquer'd,
[*To* Edgar.
Along with me, I muſt conſult your Father.
[*Ex.* Albany *and* Edgar.
Reg. Help every Hand to ſave a noble Life;
My half o'th' Kingdom for a Man of Skill
To ſtop this precious ſtream.
Baſt. Away ye Empyricks,
Torment me not with your vain Offices;
The Sword has pierc't too far; *Legitimacy*
At laſt has got it.
Reg. The Pride of Nature dyes.
Gon. Away, the minutes are too precious,
Diſturb us not with thy impertinent Sorrow.
Reg. Art thou my Rival then profeſt?
Gon. Why, was our Love a Secret? cou'd there be
Beauty like Mine, and Gallantry like His,
And not a mutual Love? Juſt Nature then
Had err'd. Behold that Copy of Perfection,
That Youth whoſe Story will have no foul Page,
But where it ſays he ſtoopt to *Regan*'s Arms:
Which yet was but Compliance, not Affection;
A Charity to begging, ruin'd Beauty!
Reg. Who begg'd when *Goneril* writ That? expoſe it,
[*Throws her a Letter.*
And let it be your Army's mirth, as 'twas
This charming Youth's and mine, when in the Bow'r
He breath'd the warmeſt Extaſies of Love;
Then panting on my Breaſt, cry'd, Matchleſs *Regan!*
That *Goneril* and thou ſhou'd e're be Kin!
Gon. Dye, *Circe*, for thy Charms are at an end,
Expire before my face, and let me ſee
How well that boaſted Beauty, will become
Congealing Blood, and Death's convulſive Pangs:
Dye and be huſht, for at my Tent laſt Night
Thou drank'ſt thy Bane, amidſt thy rev'ling Bowls:
Ha! Doſt thou Smile? Is then thy Death thy Sport?
Or has the truſty Potion made thee Mad?

Reg.

Reg. Thou com'ſt as ſhort of me in thy Revenge
As in my *Gloſter*'s Love, my Jealouſie
Inſpir'd me to prevent thy feeble Malice,
And poiſon thee at thy own Banquet.
Gon. Ha?
Baſt. No more, my Queen's, of this untimely Strife,
You both deſerve my Love, and both poſſeſt it.
Come, Soldiers, bear me in; and let
Your Royal Preſence grace my laſt minutes;
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud Conqueſt I forgive;
Who wou'd not chuſe, like me, to yield his Breath
T' have Rival Queens contend for him in Death? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *A Priſon.*

Lear *aſleep, with his Head on* Cordelia's *Lap.*

Cord. What Toils, thou wretched King, haſt thou endur'd
To make Thee draw, in Chains, a Sleep ſo ſound?
Thy better Angel charm thy raviſht Mind
With fanſi'd Freedom; Peace is us'd to lodge
On Cottage Straw. Thou haſt the Beggar's Bed,
Therefore ſhould'ſt have the Beggar's careleſs Thought.
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember Thee,
What fate has ſeiz'd Thee in this general Wreck
I know not, but I know thou muſt be wretched,
Becauſe *Cordelia* holds thee Dear.
O Gods! a ſudden Gloom o'er-whelms me, and the Image
Of Death o'er-ſpreads the Place.——Ha! Who are theſe?

Enter Captain *and* Officers *with Cords.*

Capt. Now, Sirs, diſpatch, already you are paid
In part, the beſt of your Reward's to come.
Lear. Charge, charge upon their Flank, their laſt Wing halts.
Puſh, puſh the Battel, and the Day's our own.
Their Ranks are broke, down with *Albany.*
Who holds my Hands?——O thou deceiving Sleep,
I was this very Minute on the Chace;
And now a Priſoner here.——What mean the Slaves?
You will not murther me?
Cord. Help, Earth and Heaven!
For your Souls ſake, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.
Offic. No Tears, good Lady, no pleading againſt Gold and Preferment.

Come,

Come, Sirs, make ready your Cords.
Cord. You, Sir, I'll ſeize,
You have a humane Form, and if no Pray'rs
Can touch your Soul to ſpare a poor Kings Life,
If there be any thing that you hold Dear,
By that I beg you to diſpatch me firſt.
Capt. Comply with her Requeſt; diſpatch her Firſt.
Lear. Off Hell-hounds, by the Gods I charge you ſpare her;
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious Daughter:
No pity?——Nay, then take an old Mans Vengeance.

Snatches a Partiſan, and ſtrikes down two of them; the reſt quit Cordelia, *and turn upon him. Enter* Edgar *and* Albany.

Edg. Death! Hell! ye Vultures, hold your impious Hands,
Or take a ſpeedier Death than you wou'd give.
Capt. By whoſe Command?
Edg. Behold the Duke, your Lord.
Alb. Guards, ſeize thoſe Inſtruments of Cruelty.
Cord. My *Edgar*, Oh!
Edg. My Dear *Cordelia*! Lucky was the Minute
Of our Approach, the Gods have weigh'd our Suff'rings;
W'are paſt the Fire, and now muſt ſhine to Ages.
Gent. Look here, my Lord, ſee where the generous King
Has ſlain two of 'em.
Lear. Did I not, Fellow?
I've ſeen the Day, with my good biting Faulchion
I cou'd have made 'em skip; I am Old now,
And theſe vile Croſſes ſpoil me; out of Breath?
Fie, Oh! quite out of Breath, and ſpent.
Alb. Bring in old *Kent*; and, *Edgar*, guide you hither
Your Father, whom you ſaid was near,
[*Ex.* Edgar.
He may be an Ear-witneſs at the leaſt
Of our proceedings.
[Kent *brought in here.*
Lear. Who are you?
My Eyes are none o'th' Beſt, I'll tell you ſtreight;
Oh *Albany*! Well, Sir, we are your Captives,
And you are come to ſee Death paſs upon us.
Why this Delay? —— or is't your Highneſs pleaſure
To give us firſt the Torture? ſay ye ſo?
Why here's old *Kent* and I, as tough a Pair
As e're bore Tyrants Stroke:——But my *Cordelia*,
My poor *Cordelia* here, O pity!———
Alb. Take off their Chains.——Thou injur'd Majeſty,
The Wheel of Fortune now has made her Circle,

And Bleſſings yet ſtand 'twixt thy Grave and Thee.
Lear. Com'ſt thou, inhumane Lord, to ſooth us back
To a Fool's Paradiſe of Hope, to make
Our Doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well
Acquainted with Misfortune to be gull'd
With Lying Hope; No, we will hope no more.
Alb. I have a tale, t' unfold ſo full of Wonder
As cannot meet an eaſie Faith;
But by that Royal injur'd Head 'tis True.
Kent. What wou'd your Highneſs?
Alb. Know, the Noble *Edgar*
Impeacht Lord *Edmund* ſince the Fight, of Treaſon,
And dar'd him for the Proof to ſingle Combat,
In which the Gods confirm'd his Charge by Conqueſt;
I left ev'n now the Traitor wounded mortally.
Lear. And whither tends this Story?
Alb. E'er they fought
Lord *Edgar* gave into my Hands this Paper,
A blacker Scrowl of Treaſon, and of Luſt,
Than can be found in the Records of Hell;
There, Sacred Sir, behold the Character
Of *Goneril* the worſt of Daughters, but
More vicious Wife.
Cord. Cou'd there be yet Addition to their Guilt?
What will not They that wrong a Father do?
Alb. Since then my Injuries, *Lear*, fall in with Thine,
I have reſolv'd the ſame Redreſs for both.
Kent. What ſays my Lord?
Cord. Speak, for me thought I hard
The charming Voice of a deſcending God.
Alb. The Troops by *Edmund* rais'd, I have disbanded;
Thoſe that remain are under my Command.
What Comfort may be brought to chear your Age,
And heal your Savage Wrongs, ſhall be apply'd;
For to your Majeſty we do reſign
Your Kingdom, ſave what part your Self conferr'd
On us in Marriage.
Kent. Hear you that, my Liege?
Cord. Then they are Gods, and Vertue is their Care.
Lear. Is't poſſible?
Let the Spheres ſtop their Courſe, the Sun make halt,
The winds be huſht, the Seas and Fountains reſt;
All Nature pauſe, and liſten to the Change.
Where is my *Kent*, my *Cajus*?
Kent. Here my Liege.
Lear. Why I have News that will recall thy Youth;

Ha!

Ha! Didſt thou hear't, or did th' inſpiring Gods
Whiſper to me alone? Old *Lear* ſhall be
A King again.
Kent. The Prince that like a God has Pow'r, has ſaid it.
Lear. Cordelia then ſhall be a Queen, mark that:
Cordelia ſhall be a Queen; Winds catch the Sound,
And bear it on your roſie Wings to Heav'n.
Cordelia is a Queen.

Re-enter Edgar *with* Gloſter.

Alb. Look, Sir, where Pious *Edgar* comes,
Leading his Eye-leſs Father: O my Liege!
His wondrous Story will deſerve your Leiſure;
What he has done and ſuffer'd for your ſake,
What for the fair *Cordelia's*.
Gloſt. Where is my Liege? Conduct me to his Knees, to hail
His ſecond Birth of Empire; my dear *Edgar*
Has, with himſelf, reveal'd the King's bleſt Reſtauration.
Lear. My poor dark *Gloſter*;
Gloſt. O let me kiſs that once more Sceptred Hand!
Lear. Hold, Thou miſtak'ſt the Majeſty, kneel here;
Cordelia has our Pow'r, *Cordelia's* Queen.
Speak, is not that the noble Suff'ring *Edgar*?
Gloſt. My pious Son, more dear than my loſt Eyes!
Lear. I wrong'd him too, but here's the fair Amends.
Edg. Your Leave, my Liege, for an unwelcome Meſſage,
Edmund (but that's a Trifle) is expir'd;
What more will touch you, your imperious Daughters
Goneril and haughty *Regan*, both are Dead,
Each by the other poiſon'd at a Banquet;
This, Dying, they confeſt.
Cord. O fatal Period of ill-govern'd Life!
Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my Heart feels yet
A Pang of Nature for their wretched Fall;———.
But, *Edgar*, I defer thy Joys too long:
Thou ſerv'dſt diſtreſt *Cordelia*; take her Crown'd:
Th' imperial Grace freſh blooming on her Brow;
Nay, *Gloſter*, Thou haſt here a Father's Right,
Thy helping Hand t' heap Bleſſings on their Heads.
Kent. Old *Kent* throws in his hearty Wiſhes too.
Edg. The Gods and You too largely recompence
What I have done; the Gift ſtrikes Merit dumb.
Cord. Nor do I bluſh to own my ſelf o'er-paid
For all my ſuff'rings paſt.
Gloſt. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloſter* his diſcharge.

Lear.

Lear. No, *Gloster*, Thou hast business yet for Life;
Thou, *Kent*, and I, retir'd to some close Cell
Will gently pass our short reserves of Time
In calm Reflections on our Fortunes past,
Cheer'd with Relation of the prosperous Reign
Of this celestial Pair; Thus our Remains
Shall in an even Course of Thought be past,
Enjoy the present Hour, nor fear the Last.

Edg. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,
Peace spreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty blooms
Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can Witness
How much thy Love to Empire I prefer!
Thy bright Example shall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Vertue shall at last succeed. [*Ex. Omnes.*

FINIS.

EPILOGUE, Spoken by Mrs. *Barry*.

INconstancy, the reigning Sin o' th' Age,
Will scarce endure true Lovers on the Stage,
You hardly ev'n in Plays with such dispence,
And Poets kill 'em in their own Defence.
Yet one bold Proof I was resolv'd to give,
That I cou'd three Hours Constancy out-live.
You fear, perhaps, whilst on the Stage w'are made
Such Saints, we shall indeed take up the Trade;
Sometimes we threaten,——but our Virtue may
For Truth I fear with your Pit Valour weigh:
For (not to flatter either) I much Doubt
When we are off the Stage, and you are out,
We are not quite so Coy, nor you so Stout.
We talk of Nunn'ries——But to be sincere
Whoever lives to see us cloister'd there,
May hope to meet our Criticks at Tangier.
For shame give over this inglorious Trade
Of worrying Poets, and go maul th' Alcade
Well——since y'are all for blustring in the Pit,
This Play's Reviver humbly do's admit
Your abs'lute Pow'r to damn his part of it:
But still so many Master-Touches shine
Of that vast Hand that first laid this Design,
That in great Shakespear's *Right, He's bold to say,*
If you like nothing, you have seen to Day,
The Play your Judgment damns, not you the Play.

FINIS.